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SUPER PLAY

ISSUE 33

JULY 1995

- KILLER INSTINCT
- DOOM
- DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2

All on the SNES!!

ULTRA 64

First pictures and shock news!

The magic is back

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RPG meets anime on the cursed island of Lodoss

IRRESPONSIBLE PICTURES • P76

Angel Cop and 3 Man reviewed PLUS win Kishin Heidan goodies

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SUPER PLAY

JULY 1995 Issue 33

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SUPER PLAY EDITORIAL

FROM THE BIG CHAIR

Our full contents listing starts just over the page

It's hard to tell where to start this month – there are just so many things happening in the world of Nintendo.

Check out this month's Super Express for the latest shock news about Nintendo's Ultra 64, along with the very first shots of the machine itself. That's right, we've got genuine pictures of the 64-bit wonder machine. Take a look for yourself, and decide whether you think it's dishier than a dishy thing or an ugly lump of plastic.

On a more imminent note, the eagerly awaited *Secret Of Mana 2* is almost with us, and we've given it a front cover and six whole screen-shot packed pages celebrate the fact. Could this be the biggest and best RPG cart yet?

And any fears of fewer new games being developed for the SNES will be calmed by our hot news on a trio of potentially stormers – *Killer Instinct*, *Doom* and a follow-up to *Donkey Kong Country* will all soon be within your grasp. You can find out the latest on these blockbusters in this very issue.

Elsewhere in the issue you can read all about *Mortal Kombat 3*, and developers Williams' plans to bring this blood-filled spectacular to the SNES in all its glory.

Following on from the recent slamming Nintendo and Sega received from the Monopolies And Mergers Commission, this issue we bring you a report on where you're hard-earned cash actually goes when you fork out for the latest cart – including how much goes to the programmers, and how big a slice Nintendo themselves take. The results may surprise you.

Somewhere along the line we've even found time to bring you reviews of the latest SNES sensations, including the long-awaited *Jungle Strike* and outrageously cute puzzler *Kirby's Avalanche*.

Aaaaand... taking time out from the big chair I recently attended the huge E3 computer exhibition over in Los Angeles – you can read all about the SNES related goings on at the show on page 38.

All in all, we think we've done ourselves proud this month. We hope you agree.

Alison Harper
Editor

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
SUPER PLAY
ABC: 37,747*
* Super Play's circulation – THAT'S ACTUALLY AN INCREASE, FACT FANS

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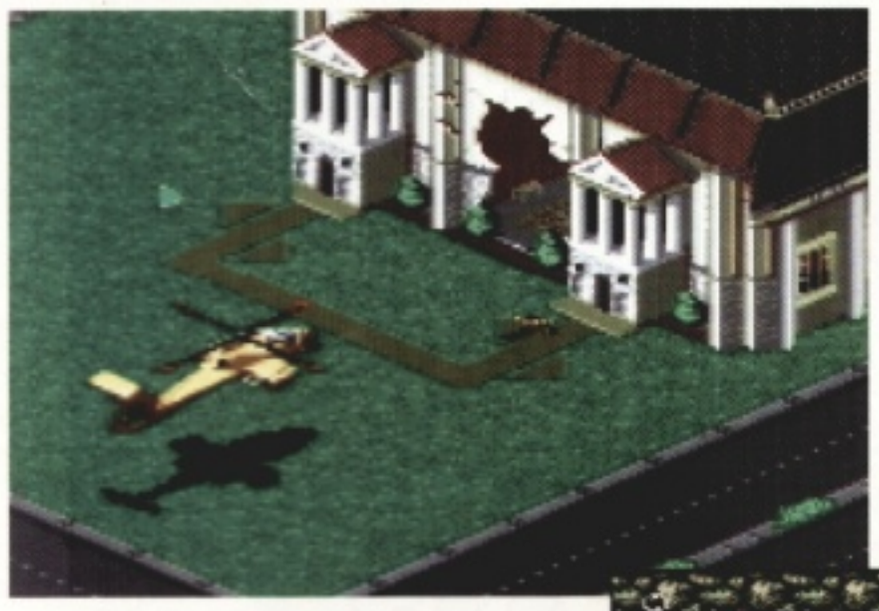

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SUPER EXPRESS

SUPER

NEWS NETWORK SUPER NINTENDO NEWS NETWORK

KILLER INSTINCT ON THE SNES

We don't know quite how Orchid manages to fight in those boots... but she does.

Don't believe us? Then we'll say it once more. Nintendo's successful arcade beat-'em-up, *Killer Instinct*, will be available on your Super Nintendo this summer.

In a move reminiscent of last year's *Donkey Kong Country* unveiling, Nintendo has surprised the video game industry once again by stretching the assumed limits of the SNES. Making the announcement on May 11th at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles, it was explained that advances in design techniques and a remarkable improvement in data compression had enabled a dramatic leap forward in 16-bit programming.

"As we've stated in the past, there's still much to be seen on the 16-bit platform; the phenomenal success of *Donkey Kong Country* was only the beginning," explained Peter Main, Nintendo's vice-president. "With the combined talents of Nintendo and Rare, *Killer Instinct* will give consumers arcade-style graphics rivalling those on 32-bit systems, and only for the price of a 16-bit cartridge." That price has been set at $75 in the US, expensive but unsurprising for a 32 meg cartridge.

The SNES incarnation is a pretty faithful representation of the arcade game. Using the latest version of its ACM (Advanced Computer Modelling) technology,

Orchid stands triumphantly after splattering her opponent to bits.

Spinal is all that remains of an ancient and once powerful warrior.

Rare has given *Killer Instinct* the *DKC* treatment to fit it all onto a 32 megabit cartridge. All the characters are present and their moves remain perfectly intact, from the 46-hit double-Ultra combos to the shadow moves and danger moves.

The major difference in the game itself will be in the lack of three-dimensional zooming and panning that applied to the fighters and the backgrounds as they moved towards or away from each other. Instead, the stages have been altered or redesigned and will use multi-layered

Thunder – he'll steal yours if you get too close...

Sabrewulf and Glacius have a rumble. Glacius isn't doing too badly considering he was forced into the tournament. Right: Riptor and Orchid.

EXPRESS

NEWS NETWORK SUPER NINTENDO NEWS NETWORK SUPER NINTENDO

Riptor takes a bit of tumble at the hands of Orchid.

Jago and Fulgore attempt to outdo each other on the hardness front.

parallax to give the impression of depth. However, Rare's designers are confident that it will improve on the arcade game in many ways and it's been revealed that they've added extra features to all the stages; new foregrounds, reflections, swirling mist and swinging lamps that illuminate parts of the arena are just some of the changes.

And for the Ultra 64? Now that the chipset has been completed, Rare is confident it can produce a far more ambitious implementation of the game which will exploit the 64-bit technology and make even the coin-op seem lame by comparison. A development team is already working on a new version of *Killer Instinct* for the NU64 console that will be ready in time for the machine's launch.

Nintendo US is taking a leaf from the book of many Japanese software houses by pressing a CD of the game's original soundtrack (OST). Entitled *Killer Cuts [oh dear – Ed]*, it features 16 themes written for the coin-op by Rare's sound artists.

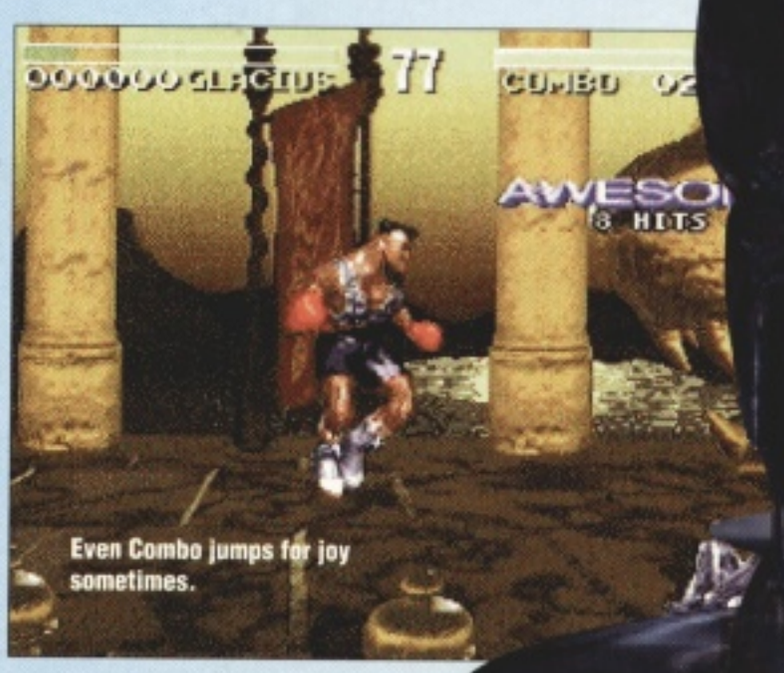
The CD will be given away free with the first 2 million cartridges as part of a $20 million dollar campaign to promote the game this summer. Nintendo is confident that four million SNES owners in the US alone will want to pick up *KI* for themselves, and even predicts that it will outsell all the games on all the next gen machines released at Christmas five times over.

Killer Instinct is scheduled for release on August 30th in the US, although a UK date isn't confirmed at the time of going to press. In the light of its other surprise news announcement regarding the Ultra 64 (see page 8), it's easy to see why Nintendo is committed to supporting the SNES for a long time to come.

Glacius realises that a cold shoulder doesn't always work as he gets his ears boxed.

He's cool.

Jago, on the right, is apparently a Tibetan monk guided by a powerful Tiger Spirit.



Even Combo jumps for joy sometimes.

YOU DRIVE ME APE

Donkey Kong Country 2: Diddy Kong's Quest

Nintendo ● 32Mbit

It was inevitable, somehow. With the success of *Donkey Kong Country*, the question to ask was not if but *when* a sequel would appear. Now it has, and it's looking very attractive indeed – as we've come to expect from the purveyors of some of the finest graphics ever to appear on 16-bit hardware.

Donkey Kong has vanished, and Diddy believes King K. Rool is responsible. The game kicks off where the last one finished, on the wreck of K. Rool's Gangplank Galleon which crashed off the reef of Kremling Island. *Diddy's Quest* will lead you through more than 100 levels of coo-worthy ACM graphics that include haunted forests, lava-filled caverns and even a giant honeycombed beehive oozing with sticky honey. Help is on hand from a new line-up of animal aides, such as a spider who sports a small fortune in four pairs of matching tennis shoes.

The improvements that Rare has made to its ACM graphics process for the purpose of creating *Killer Instinct* are also visible in *DKQ*, with the aforementioned sticky honey glooping down the front of the screen in a rather attractive fashion. They even claim you'll be able to see 'the hairs on Diddy's back' with the SNES hardware fooled into displaying a higher resolution through software trickery.

With Rare taking on extra staff and Nintendo requiring more big titles for its 16-bit customers, it's possible that other established Nintendo characters will also get the ACM treatment. A *Kirby* game is currently the most likely option, although the possibility of Yoshi getting his own platform game has been mooted.

Diddy Kong's Quest will be released in November and is clearly Nintendo's current hope for a big Christmas game. A CD of the game's original soundtrack will also be available. After the mixed response we've had to our review of the first *DKC* game, we'll be interested to see just how well *DKC2* will be received.

Introducing Diddy and Dixie. Altogether now, aww, don't they look cute in their little outfits? No, really.

Diddy and Dixie and a swash-buckling bee do battle in the honeycomb zone...

Diddy springs high to jump for that lovely juicy bunch of bananas.

WELL, WE AIN'T WHISTLIN' DIXIE

In the big DK's absence Diddy Kong is joined by a new partner, a female ape called DIxie Kong. To promote the game and announce their new character at E3, Nintendo of America went so far as to issue a press release devoted to her: but it really is of such stomach-churningly low quality (sample line: "Like most kids in love, neither Diddy nor Dixie will admit to anyone that they are boyfriend and girlfriend") that we'll spare you the excesses and concentrate on the difference she makes to the game.

Dixie boasts a prehensile ponytail, if you will, that she uses to whip Kremlings and pick up barrels. She can even lift Diddy into high places to look for secret areas as they search for the whereabouts of Donkey Kong. Another hair-endowed ability is to spin her ponytail like a helicopter's blades *[much like Muttley's ears in Catch The Pigeon, then. Mmm, thought so – Ollie]* so that she can drift slowly to earth from high altitudes and aim for distant platforms.

And this, yes, it looks suspiciously like the fairground section!

NINTENDO ULTRA 64™

REVEALED!

Take a good look. We actually obtained this picture before Nintendo UK and its PR agency...

Nintendo's next-generation console is slowly but surely taking shape...

Take your first look at the Ultra 64, Nintendo's 64-bit next generation console, as it was revealed in Los Angeles on May 11th to an eager and exclusive congregation of curious and fact-hungry video-game journalists.

Although this design hasn't been finalised – the colour, in particular, is questionable – it's unlikely to change significantly between now and the machine's release. But more on that over the page.

This early mock-up of the big N's box of tricks seems to blend the Neo Geo CD's sensual curves with the 3DO's front column stands. With its bakelite colouring, dial pad ports and 'RKO'-style NU64 logo it actually reminded us of a homely old crystal radio set, the sort of apparatus that wouldn't look out of place in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*.

The built-in multi-player facility, provided by the four three-pinned joypad ports on the front of the unit, may be more of a selling point than a sign that Nintendo regards simultaneous multi-play as an essential option. The potential to link up machines has been suggested, however. The joypads themselves have been kept noticeably secret, and Nintendo may be planning something as eye-catching as those on the Playstation (although *Super Play* won't be too disappointed if they stick with something similar to the SNES pad).

As you can see from the cartridge, its design is almost identical to that of the Super Famicom and European Super Nintendo cartridge. Although Nintendo of America was once reluctant to rule out CD, Japan's insistence on cartridge has clearly won out. This decision won't prove popular with many third party games publishers, who feel that Nintendo's tight control over cart manufacture restricts them unnecessarily (see our feature on page 34 for the low-down). But the technical and financial limitations of cartridge may have been overcome. Unconfirmed reports suggest that a remarkable new compression technique involving the inexpensive SA-1 chip will allow games data to be compacted onto ROM by a ratio of as much as 10:1.

It's also known that Nintendo's R&D has looked into the possibility of a new optical storage medium. Whether their work will ever prove fruitful remains to be seen, but it's almost guaranteed that the back of the NU64 will have enough ports and slots to accommodate any new technology.

But...

NO ULTRA 64

Strike that Ultra 64 from your Christmas list: Nintendo says it won't appear before April 1996. Read on for the good news and the bad news...

At the same press conference in which the Ultra 64 was shown, Nintendo officially confirmed that it would not be launched in the West until April of 1996.

The announcement by Nintendo of America naturally emphasised the more positive aspects of their decision. The final chipset for the Ultra 64 console has now been completed by Nintendo and Silicon Graphics Inc; game developers will shortly be able to work with the first genuine pre-production models of the 64-bit hardware, rather than making do with SGI workstations and educated guesswork.

The relatively low price tag of $250 has also been reaffirmed, and it may be a vital factor in the Ultra's success. The $400 (and £400+) price tag attached to official launches of both Sony Playstation and Sega Saturn won't endear them to many parents come Christmas. Nintendo, on the other hand, has traditionally sold its hardware at a low price whilst making its profits on software sales: the first US Super Nintendo units sold for a comparable $200.

Technical details remain vague, but the heart of the machine is a true 64-bit processor (most likely the R4300i RISC processor) coupled with a single custom graphics chip which will handle all visual and audio functions. The Rambus Inc. architecture has resulted in an incredible 500MHz databus, capable of transferring 500 megabytes per second between memory and processor (something essential for advanced graphics). The inclusion of so many capacities in one chip was doubtless essential to Nintendo's costing of the project.

Nintendo will first officially unveil Nintendo Ultra 64 at the annual Shoshinkai Show on November 24th, 25th, and 26th, 1995 in Makuhari, Japan; then at the Consumer Electronics Show on January 5th, 1996 in Las Vegas. April 1996 will see the official launch of the console in both North America and Europe.

A lack of polished software for NU64 is cited as the delay: recognising the necessity of a library of must-have games available at launch (else "risk Ultra 64 becoming the next Jaguar, 32X or 3DO", as Howard Lincoln put it), Nintendo has effectively given its developers a chance to explore their new machine for another ten months, experiment with new techniques and exploit its true potential - something that's taken many years with simpler 16-bit consoles. In the meantime, Nintendo's commitment to their existing customers means that SNES owners have got some exciting things to be getting along with.

THE ULTRA 64 CONFIRMED GAMES LIST

KILLER INSTINCT by Nintendo
CRUIS'N USA by Nintendo
TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER by Acclaim
DOOM by Williams Entertainment
TOP GUN: A NEW ADVENTURE by Spectrum Holobyte
MORTAL KOMBAT 3 by Williams Entertainment
COOL SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD by Virgin
RED BARON by Sierra Online
ROBOTECH ACADEMY by Gametek
FINAL FANTASY by Squaresoft
MONSTER DUNK by Mindscape

Although titles are unconfirmed, games are also in development by the following companies:

Paradigm Simulations (*Pilotwings 2*?)
DMA Design
GTE Interactive Media
Virgin Interactive
Angel Studio

AMERICAN

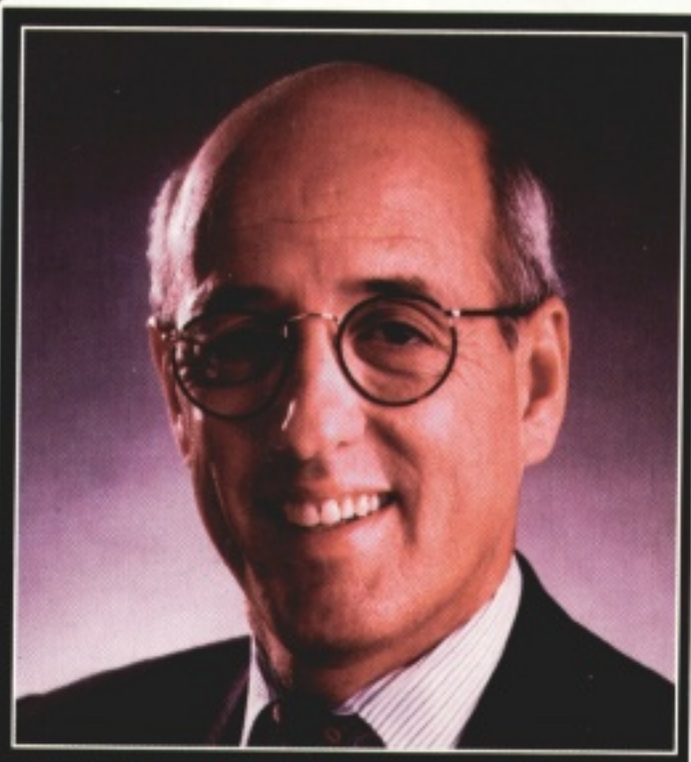
Robotech Academy
Gametek ● 1996

A Valkyrie hovering in GERWALK mode is the perfect excuse for a bit of sad *Macross* trivia. GERWALK actually stands for Ground Effective Replacement of Winged Armament with Locomotive Knee-joint. Phew.

UNTIL 1996

THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE NEXT GENERATION

Realising that fans expecting an imminent Ultra 64 release would deserve some sort of explanation as to why Nintendo's next-generation console had been delayed for the best part of a year, Nintendo gathered together statements from their prime suits to try and placate them.



Peter Main, Nintendo of America vice president (Marketing).

"The story of our industry is the never-ending search for better and better game play and game graphics. Once a masterpiece is created, like last year's *Donkey Kong Country*, the bar is raised for all game developers. We think Nintendo will move that bar even higher by the end of this year with surprises we'll unveil next week. And by the end of April of next year, game players will see what true 64-bit processing really means – with a number of games from the world's top software developers that will set the bar far higher than most people thought possible; with games that will be available only for Nintendo Ultra 64."

Howard Lincoln, chairman of Nintendo of America.

"After 19 months of intense development, we have attained our two main goals for Nintendo Ultra 64; to develop a chipset capable of delivering the world's best video game experience, and to do it at a price that can deliver a hardware set below $250 retail.

However, we have made a conscious decision not to rush Nintendo Ultra 64 to market. Instead, we've decided to give our software developers additional time to maximize the power of this system in their game creation.

We're dedicated to delivering games which are a quantum leap beyond any that have preceded them. In fact, we believe that at the E3 trade show in Los Angeles the world will discover once again that the best new software for any video game system this year will again be available exclusively for play on Nintendo's 16-bit Super NES – just as it was last Christmas with *Donkey Kong Country*."

Tom Jermoluk, president and CEO of Silicon Graphics, Inc.

"We agree with Nintendo's decision. From the start, SGI has had a vision of what we could do if we dedicated the power of our technology and our experience creating computer graphics solely to the purpose of making video games. With what's coming off of the final chipset, I'd say that even we're amazed. Now this breakthrough 3D graphics technology needs to be translated into video games which take full advantage of the power of the SGI chipset."

Tim Stamper, managing director of Rare, Ltd., and creator of Donkey Kong Country and Killer Instinct.

"As the developer perhaps most experienced with Nintendo Ultra 64, we fully support this new release schedule. We have again clearly raised the software standard with the new 16-bit games to be unveiled at E3. But, I can assure you that once the world's video game developers spend time exploring the power of this incredible Nintendo Ultra 64 chipset, you'll see gaming jump far beyond anything that currently exists on any platform."

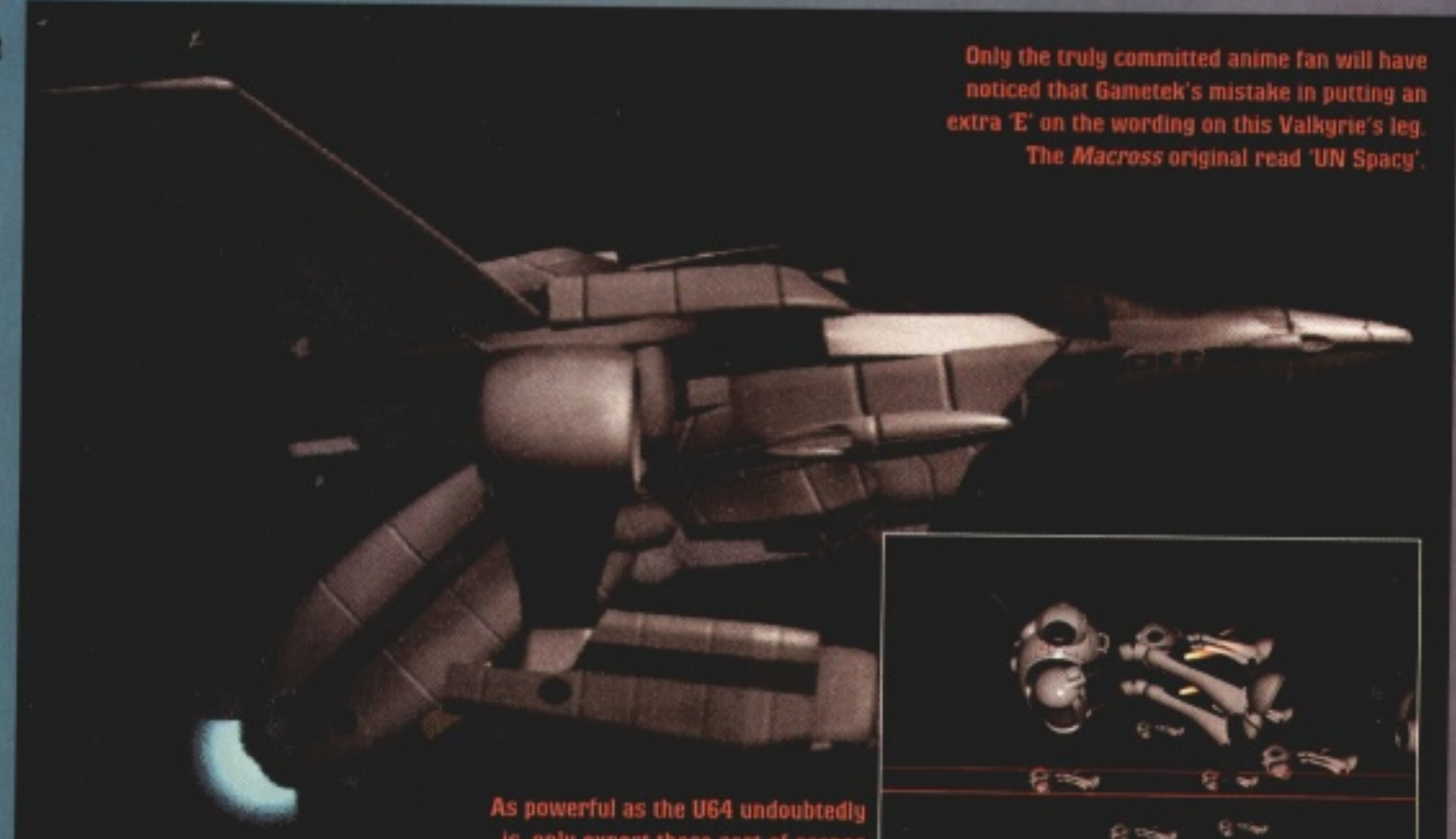
As ever, we're interested in your thoughts. Would you wait for a cheaper, superior next-gen machine? Or do you think Nintendo has blown it, big time? Encapsulate your gut reaction on an assemblage of ink and paper and send it to the Playback address.

ANIME FOR THE ULTRA 64?

It's strange to think that in the topsy-turvy world of Nintendo's Ultra 64, a console built in Japan with American technology, one of its first games should also be derived from a mish-mash of the two cultures.

Robotech is based on an (in)famous clash of three Japanese anime series; *Super Dimensional Fortress Macross*, *Super Dimensional Cavalry Southern Cross* and *Genesis Climber Mospeada*. American producer Carl Macek was commissioned by video company Harmony Gold to find an animated TV show that would appeal to a teenage audience. Macek decided on *Macross* but, on discovering that it only ran to 36 episodes – when 65 was the minimum required for US syndication – he roped in *Southern Cross* and *Mospeada* (because of their similar art styles) and threw them all together, rewriting the story and making the visuals fit. Toy company Revell, who held the *Macross* toy licence, supplied the generic name *Robotech* and an 85 episode show was born.

Now Gametek has revealed the first pictures of its forthcoming *Robotech Academy*, based on Macek's hybrid show, which is destined exclusively for the Ultra 64.



Only the truly committed anime fan will have noticed that Gametek's mistake in putting an extra 'E' on the wording on this Valkyrie's leg. The *Macross* original read 'UN Spacy'.

As powerful as the U64 undoubtedly is, only expect these sort of scenes in intros and what our American cousins like to call 'cool cinemas'.

DOOMED!

Doom

Williams ● 16 meg + FX2

If you thought *Mortal Kombat II* was the most gory game your SNES would ever see, you'd be sadly mistaken. PC and Jaguar owners will tell you that standing in a ring and knocking limbs off an opponent is nowhere near as gratifying as a pump-action shotgun in the face; because those same PC and Jaguar owners will almost certainly own a copy of *Doom*, id Software's first-person shoot-'em-up and sequel (of sorts) to *Wolfenstein 3D*. This September you'll be able to see how right they were as Williams releases *Doom* for your Super Nintendo.

The game starts with the forces of evil slowly creeping out of their hellish pits onto this earth, creating fortresses riddled with tunnels and complex mazes and stuffed to overflowing with some of the foulest creatures the SNES has ever seen. As with *Wolfenstein* your job is to find your way through each fortress, killing everything in your path with the weaponry you'll find along the way.

It's here that the similarities end, though. The first difference is that SNES *Doom* will not be coded by id Software, despite their eagerness to produce it for all other formats. We can guess at the reasons, since Nintendo of America greatly incensed the game's creators by removing all trace of blood and ichor from id's SNES conversion of *Wolfenstein*. But perhaps not surprising, then, that the gore-specialists of Sculptured Software – being used to the scrutiny of the big N after *MK2* – got the job of converting one of the most violent blastfests in videogaming.

The next big difference is the sheer size of the game. Sculptured claims to have faithfully reproduced all the levels of the PC version in their entirety, and has used id's original graphics without the need for redrawing or redesign. Far from being oversized, every byte is used to faithfully reproduce twenty hours worth of map with a massive variety of scenery and needless decoration.

And then, of course, there's the insane amount of weaponry that *Doom* contains. The joy of picking up a chain gun in *Wolfenstein* pales beside *Doom*'s staggering arsenal of rocket launchers, bazookas, plasma guns and even chainsaws (I feel an age certificate coming on). This, combined with a much freer map that abandons a grid of bright square rooms in favour of exploratory puzzles involving dark stairwells and antechambers, should make *Doom* a worthy success.

We only hope the game gets certification instead of censorship, as any compromise of the pacey, responsive, taxing and visually spectacular bloodfest would be a disaster. In the meantime, pass me that shotgun...

Be ready to fire at any time...

Er, now would be a good time to let off a few rounds.

All quiet on the western front.

To the right: a selection of the eerie corridors of *Doom*. It's on the SNES!

"SORRY"–IT CAN'T BE DONE

Okay, so they said it could never be done on the SNES – those solid colour walls that made *Wolfenstein* so quick (with the occasional texture-map thrown in) will be abandoned in favour of a full-colour, fully drawn environment with scaled sprites laid over the top. The FX2 chip sitting inside the cart won't be used in the standard way, as *Doom* won't employ the same level of polygon effects that games like *Stunt Race FX* took for granted. Instead, Nintendo's technology will be used for the fast processing that pasting bitmapped images onto 3D planes requires, as well as the more appropriate functions of visual clipping and collision detection (a lot more difficult than you'd think in 3D)

Doom on the PC here. Great, eh? But pretty soon you'll be playing it on your SNES.

Doom on Jaguar. Looks quite tasty. *Doom* on the SNES looks like it'll be a best-seller.

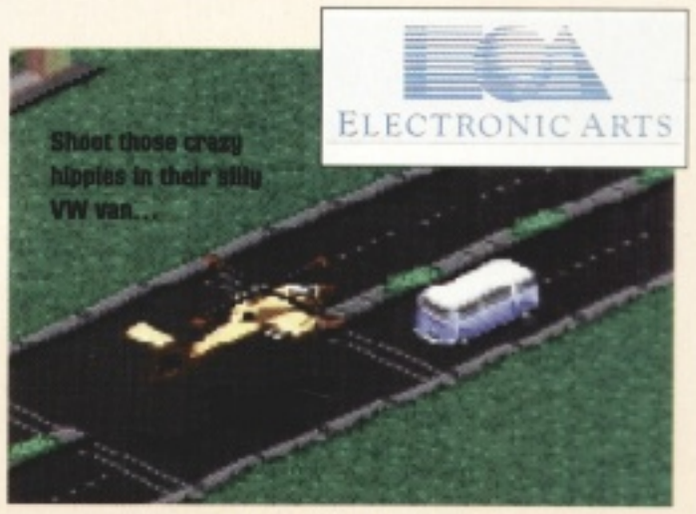
In reality the 32x version has a nasty great border around it. Nintendo beats Sega every time, eh, readers?

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN...

...FLY A HELICOPTER!

Okay, so it may only be a helicopter in a videogame, but it was the nearest we could get and it may be more fun...

In conjunction with Electronic Arts, *Super Play* is giving you the chance to fly your own helicopter... in the long-awaited follow-up to *Desert Strike*. Very much along the lines of "Desert", *Jungle Strike* involves some sharp shooting and shelling to rid the jungle of evil.



Jungle Strike is faster and bigger than its forefather. It's got nine levels and you even get the opportunity to pilot (?) a hovercraft. Anyway, if you turn to page 46, you'll find four glorious pages devoted to *Jungle Strike*. But don't go yet... Not before you've entered our competition to win a copy of the game.

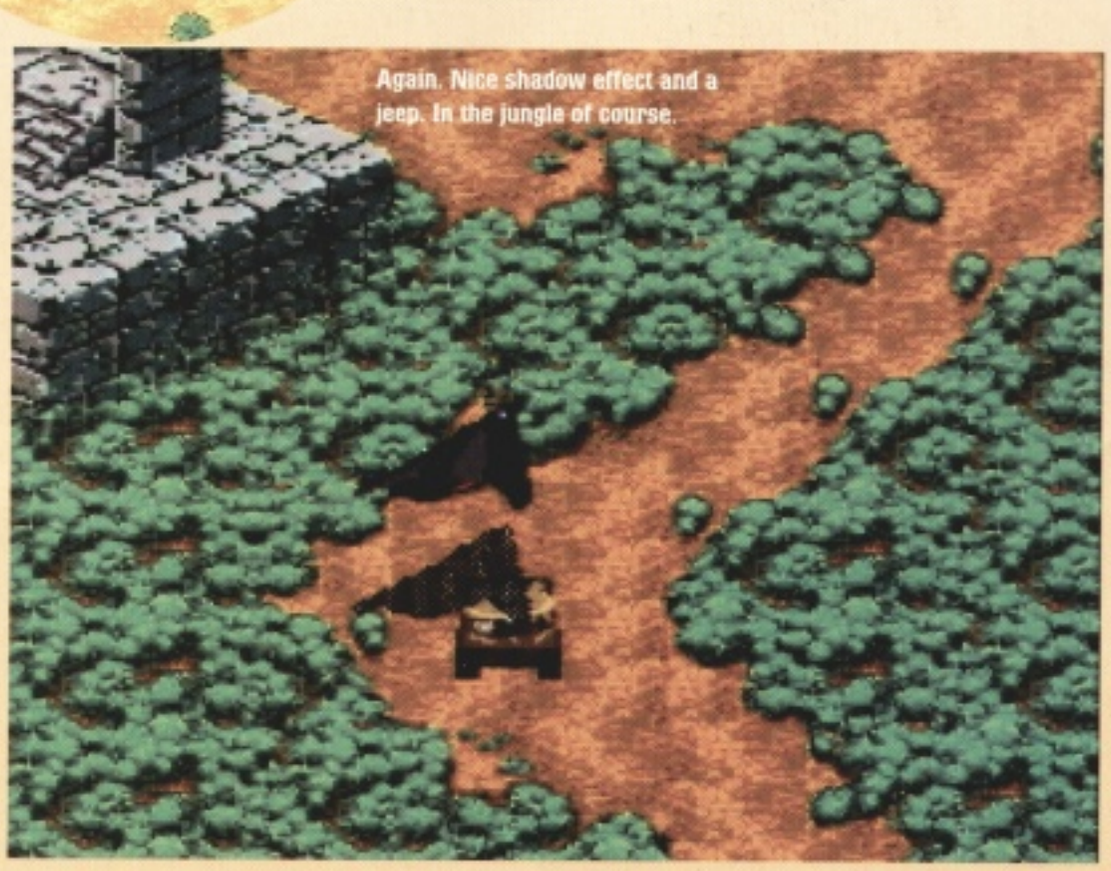
We're not embarrassed to admit that we've got copies of the game to give away to five lucky readers. If you don't win, though, you still stand the chance of winning one of 50 limited edition comics based on the game. They're sure to become collector's items in years to come, so if you keep it for long enough, you'll be able to flog it off and make yourself a right nice pile of cash! If you wanted to, of course. Not that we're that money-grabbing at *Super Play*. We'd rather keep the comic, even when it's worth hundreds of pounds. *(Speak for yourselves – Ed.)*

Lovely shadow.

If you'd like to win, you need to get a postcard or a sealed down envelope and turn to the back of it. On there, simply tell us where you think the ideal *Strike* game would be set. The most original answers will be the winners. You don't have to write a novel or anything, just give us a very brief scenario.

Next, address your answers to: Way down deep in the middle of the jungle, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BL.

Get your answers in to us by Thursday, 6th July.


Again. Nice shadow effect and a jeep. In the jungle of course.

PARLEZ VOUS KUNG FU ?

Fever pitch soccer

BRINGING THE GAME INTO DISREPUTE

AVAILABLE FROM 30th JUNE

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WARPATH ON THE

Comanche
Nintendo Of America ● 16Mbit

If you've owned your SNES for a long time it's probably dawned on you at least once – doubtless on an idle Sunday afternoon – that the system lacks...
(a) a decent golf game, and
(b) a proper flight sim.
Both genres have been attempted many times, but the reliance on Mode 7 scaling and rotation has always resulted in a flat, boring and unrealistic environment. Nintendo of America could be on the verge of correcting deficiency (b), however, as they convert *Comanche*, Nova Logic's aged but pretty successful helicopter sim, from the PC over to the SNES.

You're the pilot of an RAH-66 helicopter with reconnaissance and offensive capacities. With a front-mounted mini-gun, a rack of rockets and some self-locking AA missiles for good measure, it's your task to enter a frantic war zone of tanks, ack-acks and enemy copters and leave it a docile peace zone of twisted metal and smouldering wreckage.

As with many flight sims, your payload of weaponry and fuel is limited. Becoming familiar with your mission and stretching your resources to complete the job is essential to your success (not that you can't occasionally zip off and waste something for the hell of it, fortunately). Some 30 missions have been created specifically for the Super Nintendo version, and there's a split-screen option if you fancy your chances in a dogfight against a friend.

Some of the missions take place at night, where the display switches to a lurid green with bright spots to imitate light amplification goggles. Flying close to the ground to avoid radar detection, your Comanche is able to make surprise strikes before retreating into the darkness.

To handle the three-dimensional environment, a special Voxel system was developed. It's effectively a gridmap or array in which every point on the grid is assigned a value corresponding to the height, colour and characteristic (rock? sand? crushed velvet? water?) of the terrain. To create the view from your cockpit window, the CPU simply checks the values on the grid around and ahead of you. A few calculations are performed by the FX2 chip to account for factors such as distance and shading and the gridmap is realised on screen. The same gridmap can be used to show an overhead tactical display delineating geological contours, approaching planes and zooming missiles.

The main advantage of the Voxel system is that the player can move around the 3D environment in complete freedom, seeing mountains and canyons from all angles with a view that responds to the pitching and banking of the Comanche. The graphics are far more ambitious than in any previous Super FX title, although the finer details of the PC version are definitely lacking: at times the cockpit view resembles some bizarre impressionist painting. With a greater rate of animation it could look much smoother but at present it's still running rather slowly, despite the small graphics window. Let's hope Nintendo sees to that pesky speed problem before the game's release this summer.

Your HUD displays a painting by Monet, from his ill-fated period as a war artist.

Right: My glasses, my glasses. I've dropped my glasses.

Below: 'Petit dejeuner en plein air aux guerre' by Renoir. Just out of focus is a tightly-corseted Parisian redhead with a parasol.

Ah, now this is very clearly a, um, er...

Monet obviously used night vision too.

Thankfully, *Comanche* looks less like an impressionist painting when it moves. A little bit.

FX FAX

Nestling inside Comanche's cartridge is the Super FX2, an advanced DSP (Digital Signal Processor) chip dedicated to high-speed calculations. It'll be used in *Starfox 2* as well as *Comanche*. Developed by British software house Argonaut, the purpose of the FX2 is to ease the workload on the Super Nintendo's main CPU by handling all the mathematics required to produce complex 3D graphics. The FX2 itself runs at 21 Mhz, making it twice as fast as the original FX chip found inside *Starfox*: its calculating power is supposedly 100 times faster than that of the SNES. According to the designers it could, in theory, display as many polygons as the 3DO.

Hmm. Looking at *Comanche* maybe it just hasn't been fully exploited yet.

FIRE ON ALL RETROS!

PART 2

More arcade geriatrics from a time when a third of Super Play's readers hadn't been born...

Mr Do!

Imagineer of Japan ● 2 Mbit

Super Play readers unlucky enough to find themselves as old as the rapidly-bearding Super Play team will almost certainly have leapt from their very seats in memory of this fondant arcade fancy.

Mr Do! was originally released by Universal back in 1982: now Imagineer has picked it up for the SNES in an attempt to exploit the retro gaming craze. The SNES version contains two different games - an original mode, plus a battle mode where two players can take part simultaneously.

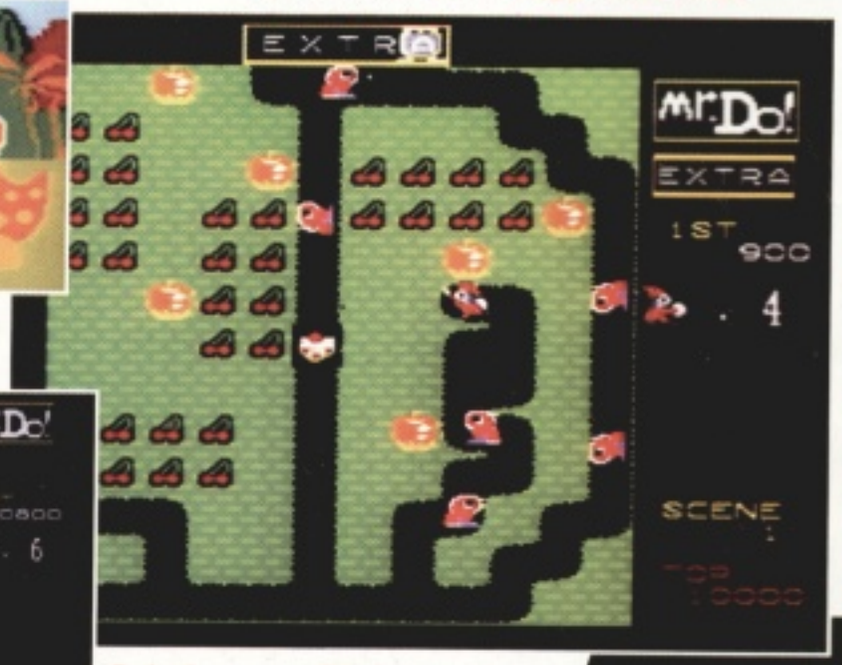
To clear each stage requires *Mr Do!* to collect all the cherries or kill all the monsters by digging, kicking, throwing a power ball or crushing enemies beneath falling apples. Touch the central target and more monsters appear, marked with the letters E, X, T, R, A: collect the whole word for a 1-Up.

Mr Do! gets its Japanese release on June 30th at the low, low price of ¥5980. With our Wil frothing in nostalgic glee at the thought of reliving those days down the snooker hall, where he scarred his hand playing *Scramble* on the rough metal thread of a coin-op joystick that had lost its screw-on bobble grip, it's almost certain that a copy of the game will be tracked down for a Super Play review.

Look, it's Mr Do!, and it looks just like the original...

... which means it looks very primitive indeed.

Look, SNES *Mr Do!* has cartoon animated bits and everything.



Geriatric gamers will be in seventh heaven with it, though. Our Wil, for instance.

Still, we can't help wondering whether you want to play 13 year-old games.

Cherries, digging, nasty dinosaurs – nostalgia days are here again.

Galaga & Galaxian

Namco ● 1 Mbit

The mists of time thicken and swirl once again, taking us back even further to 1981, then 1979 – and the two games that evolved from the quintessence of *Space Invaders*, repackaged as one double-barrelled retro blast.

When *Galaxian* appeared in '79, its innovation was that it featured waves of ships with their own particular attack patterns and swooping flight paths. Two years later *Galaga* expanded on the idea with advanced enemies that could capture your craft if you strayed into the catchment area of their tractor beams. But they were the enemies you always went for, because a successful kill of a boss Galaga gave you the 'Dual Fighter' twinned ships boasting twice the firepower. It was a simple gameplay twist but, in the days before true power-ups existed, proved extremely compulsive.

As you've probably ascertained from the ROM size, Namco has opted to release both shoot-'em-ups on one Game Boy cartridge. But it's been put together with Super Game Boy use in mind, as the original colours and arcade borders are again faithfully reproduced purely for the benefit of SNES plus Super Game Boy gamers.

Ironically, *Galaxian* was the first game that many Playstation owners would have seen upon loading up *Ridge Racer*, whilst *Galaga* graces the loading sequence of Tekken's home conversion. It would be very easy to drift into philosophical meanderings about temporal recurrence and the cyclical nature of history, but you'd probably be more interested to know that *G&G* gets its Japanese release on July 14th. We'll be there.

Galaga - think *Galaxian* with knobs on.

Cor, two shoot-'em-up classics on one cartridge. Can your trigger finger cope?

Right: The game that appeared in a thousand table-top pub cabinets, *Galaxians* has been a long time coming.

HELLO BOYS!

Super Play reveals how Nintendo's new Boys, the Super Game Boy and the Virtual Boy, are set to play a stronger role in their future plans...

SUPER GAME BOY

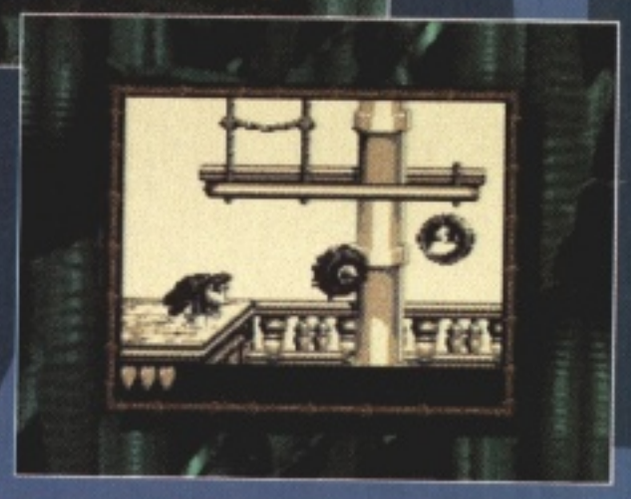
The Super Game Boy can't be described as a runaway success to date, although it's slowly gaining enough of a following for us to look at some of the software that's been designed specifically for your SNES plus SGB (a price drop for the unit wouldn't go amiss this summer, eh Nintendo?)

But all Game Boy software is now being produced specifically with its SNES semi-compatibility in mind. *Killer Instinct* and *Donkey Kong Land* are two big titles destined for 8-bit release, whilst even *Streetfighter II* has finally made it to the format.

In addition to *Galaga & Galaxians* (see previous page), Nintendo of America is planning a frenzy of similar retro bundles in the US this summer. All of them have been developed with the Super Game Boy in mind and the cartridges will carry original coin-op borders with the recommended SGB colour combination automatically selected.

Here's the line-up...

***Donkey Kong Land* has been held up for a bit of tweaking: Nintendo has high hopes for *DKL* on the Super Game Boy.**



Donkey Kong makes his way along King K. Rool's pirate galleon.

VIRTUAL BOY

Nintendo of America will launch the Virtual Boy, their 32-bit 3D video game system, in the United States on August 14th, 1995. A retail price of $179.95 was suggested.

Virtual Boy is a RISC-based, 32-bit system which uses the 'immersion technology' of Reflection Technology, Inc. of Massachusetts: two mirror-scanning LED (light emitting diode) displays that produce a genuine 3D picture of high-resolution red images against a deep, black background.

In the US, Virtual Boy will be bundled with one of the titles from the launch library (undecided as yet) and a new double-grip controller. NoA will spend $25 million on marketing and promoting the new machine. But, in a rather miserly fashion, they won't include an AC adaptor with the basic unit – you'll have to buy that separately, later in the year. A machine link-up is also expected to follow.

"Virtual Boy is unlike anything currently available for the home," said Peter Main, the man in charge of that rather generous marketing budget. "We expect to sell more than 1.5 million hardware units and 2.5 million pieces of software by the end on 1995." Most industry observers would consider that an optimistic figure, and the money being poured into promoting it does suggest that NoA knows it has its work cut out changing public opinion.

Super Play got to see the Virtual Boy software running in a more polished form, and the 3D effect does work extremely well. *Mario's Dream Tennis* looked the most promising effort, with a player perspective taken from behind the character at the baseline. The price of a VB game will average $39.95, about ten dollars more than a Game Boy cart.

Whilst no news of a British launch date has been given, it's likely that European schedules will follow the American lead very closely indeed. At current rates the Veebie would probably cost approximately £120 in the UK, with cartridges selling for £30 to £35.

Asteroids & Missile Command
1Mbit • July 1995

Missile Command was a personal favourite of the *Super Play* team. Cruise missiles stream down from the skies, threatening your cities: by placing a cross-hair you can set off a small controlled blast at any point that will destroy incoming warheads and bombers within a certain range. It's simple but frantic fun as you attempt to stop anything getting past your defences. Easier with a trackball, mind.

Drifting in the midst of an asteroid belt, only your shooting skill prevents your ship being crushed by millions of tons of floating rock. We modestly admit that we were quite good at *Asteroids* too, and well acquainted with the point-scoring technique of leaving the last fragment to fly around whilst waiting for a UFO to appear.

Missile Command, the first game to use a trackball. The cluster bombs that split up at the last second were right gits.

Centipede & Millipede
1Mbit • August 1995

The idea of both games is to shoot the segmented insects as they slither from side to side, gradually moving towards the bottom of the screen. Hit one carelessly in the body and it will split into two smaller, faster centipedes: the key to success is to aim for the head every time. *Millipede* was really just an upgrade of *Centipede* with a few added features like DDT bombs.

Atari's *Millipede*. You'll only see this kind of colour on a Super Game Boy, of course.

Defender & Joust
1Mbit • October 1995

Two unadulterated, undeniable classics for you here. Your steed in the game of *Joust* is an ostrich that can mysteriously fly: picking up your lance, the idea is to dislodge your foe from his ostrich without landing in the lava below. Tidy airborne Sir Bernie of Clifton antics.

Defender is a legend amongst video games, but if you're too young to have seen it in the arcades then here's the idea. Flying over a scrolling planet surface, you have to save the people on the ground from alien invaders who try to carry them off and mutate them. *Defender* was remarkable at the time for its speed and variety of aliens, not to mention having a game environment bigger than one wraparound screen.

Streetfighter II
Capcom • 4Mbit • August 95

Can you believe this? Clearly it can't play the same as the other versions, with only two buttons – kick and punch, we'll wager – so we'll be interested to see how they've implemented the *SFII* engine. There's a vs. mode so that you can play against a friend with another GB and another *SFII* cart: although how many Game Boy owners have ever got to use their link-up regularly?

Now you have to ask yourself if rendered graphics on the Super Game Boy are really worth it, with just four colours.

Blanka's Brazilian swamp stage sits oddly around the edge as a Super Game Boy border.

All of the following titles are scheduled for release in August and carry a $39.95 price tag…

Teleroboxer
That's tele from the Greek for 'distant' or deep (i.e. 3D); 'robo' from robot, the word invented by Karel Capek in his 1920 play R.U.R. (from the Czech *robota*, statute labour); and boxer, a pugilist opponent whose fists pack an almighty wallop. Which describes this game in full, for anyone who's still not sure.

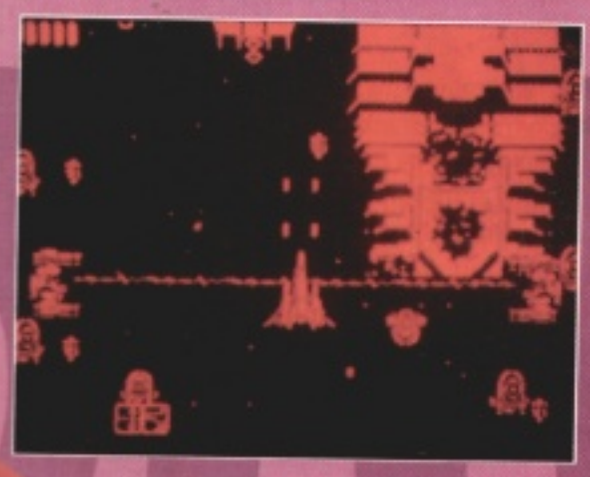
Galactic Pinball
Five tables and plenty of hidden bumpers that send the pinball deeper into the screen as it rolls up the table. Slightly odd, but looks smart when you see it running.

Mario Clash
This is really Miyamoto's Mario Bros vs. game with Mario beset on all sides by zipping Koopas. Besides moving from platform to platform, you can step back into the screen to dodge flying shells and other turtle-derived schrapnel.

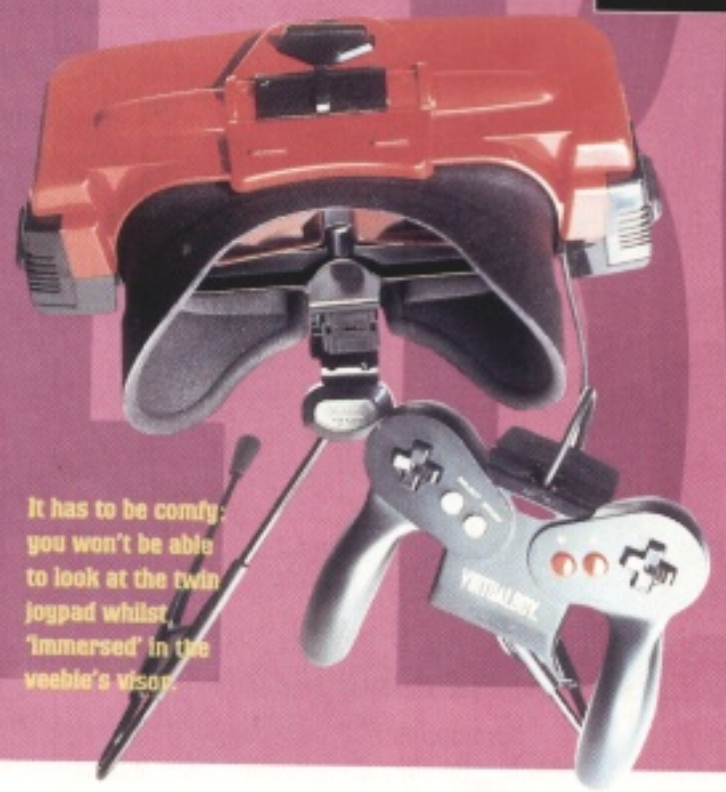
Mario's Dream Tennis
They've dragged out Yoshi, Mario, Donkey Kong Jr, Bowser and the team for this odd but cute sports game. Each character has their own strengths and weaknesses in terms of lobs, volleys and smashes.

Red Alarm
A wire-frame polygon shoot-'em-up much in the style of *Starfox*, except that the 3D perspective and your distance from an enemy is more obvious in the Veebie's display.

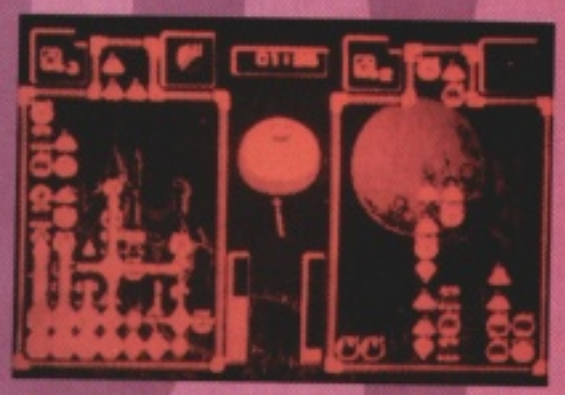
Third-party titles in development include *Vertical Force* from Hudson Soft, an overhead shoot-'em-up; The simply-named *Golf* from T&E; and *Waterworld* from Ocean – a license, as you'd expect, based on the forthcoming Kevin Costner movie. Other third parties now signed up to develop games for the Veebie include Acclaim, Bullet-Proof Software, Rare Ltd. and Software Creations. Nintendo expects more to follow.



Vertical Force, Hudson Soft's overhead blaster, lets your ship fly under bridges or over buildings as you move in and out of the screen.



It has to be comfy: you won't be able to look at the twin jogpad whilst 'immersed' in the veebie's vison.



Another puzzler from HudsonSoft – the first, and still the most enthusiastic, of VB third parties.

VAMPIRE'S KISS

Dracula XX
Konami ● 16Mbit

Dracula lives! In the heart of Transylvania, an evil cult of demon worshippers seeking immortality has resurrected the Prince of Darkness. Remembering his previous fate at the hands of Simon Belmont, the born-again bloodsucker searches for his nemesis in order to wreak unholy vengeance upon him.

But many, many years have passed: Simon is now dead and buried and, seeking out the Belmont bloodline, Dracula finds instead a direct descendent called Richter. Well, one Belmont is as good as another... Kidnapping Richter's sisters and Maria, his lover, the Dark One summons the fires of the pits of Hell to destroy their town; in the panic and confusion he escapes unhindered to his ancient castle.

Returning to discover his loved ones gone and his home in flames, Richter Belmont wonders why he ever bothers to get up on Mondays. He swears to rescue the women from the vampire's lair and finish, once and for all, what his ancestor started...

Vampire's Kiss – coming to the UK in 1995 for an official PAL release. Tidy.

Not the sort of scene you want to find when you head upstairs to bed.

An undead plumber patrols the castle of Dracula (left).

Right: Cerberus, guardian of hell. Not to be confused with Cerebus, Dave Sim's excellent comic strip about an Aardvaark barbarian.

Fans of the series have been waiting four years for a new Castlevania title to hit the SNES, although this is essentially a straightforward conversion to the Super Famicom of last year's *Dracula X* on the PC Engine. The Castlevania games have developed something of a cult following over the years – especially in Japan, where the series is called Akumajyo – but we detect a hint of nostalgia in our anticipation of *Dracula XX*, particularly its doom-laden atmosphere and tough challenge. We're also hoping for another high quality soundtrack: here in the Super Play office we've been known to indulge in an album of orchestral interpretations and crazy gypsy fiddling from Castlevania's finest musical moments.

The first level begins with Richter making his way through the burning town to face Cerberus, the three-headed hound of Greek myth that guards the gateway to Hades (alas, as scholars will testify, even Dante never explained in his Divine Comedy why anyone would be so desperate as to gatecrash the Nine Circles of Hell. We can only assume they have some pretty raucous parties down there to while away eternal damnation). Another eight levels packed with monstrous devilspawn, pinion-winged demons and screen-dominating guardians stand between Belmont and his final confrontation with the vampire lord.

If you're smart enough you may also find the two secret stages.

Like his predecessor, Richter's prime weapon of choice is the whip: power it up to

Floating eyes and hearts – the stalwart elements of *Castlevania* remain intact but upgraded in *Dracula XX*.

ALL OUT OF CREDITS

Remember how, back in SP24's Snippets, we vowed to track down the Masiya designers responsible the excellent mecha blastfest Assault Suit Valken and find out what they were up to today? We're happy to say that we have. The name to credit is Toshio Tsuchida, the man who created Valken (retitled *Cybernator* in the west) for NCS. He's currently heading up a development team called G-Craft who, curiously enough, worked with Square of Japan to produce the mobile suit wargame Front Mission. Tsuchida and his G-Craft chums are also behind the forthcoming RPG *Arc The Lad* on Sony's Playstation system. Given that his excellent games have already graced two covers of Super Play, we thought we'd highlight Tsuchida-san's gift for design and we hope to see many more of his projects in the future.

Assault Suit Valken and *Front Mission* were both mecha games with a strong but linear narrative.

It does, however, raise the issue of crediting the names behind the games. You'd think it would be a matter of courtesy for every game to list the artists, designers and programmers who worked on it; but look through your own cart collections and you'll see how most accompanying manuals don't even bother to mention the development company. Intro screens usually include a lavish corporate logo, sometimes eye-catchingly animated (Blizzard Entertainment's title screen even features a rather apt sound sample of an icy gale blowing across the arctic wastes) and impossible to skip through, but most of the time you don't know the actual people involved until the credits roll in the endgame sequence. Which, as Shining Forth editor Robert Schmitz recently pointed out, is like finding out the stars of a movie after it's over.

Ubisoft's Street Racer, like many recent games, lacks any sort of credits whatsoever. So much was squeezed into the cart's 8 megabits that there wasn't even enough memory to hold the names of Mev Dinc and his colleagues. The closest thing to a credit is in the trackside advertising hoardings, where those infamous C64

An airship aligns itself with a sky jetty to pick up an important passenger in Tsuchida's *Arc The Lad*.

a chain with the collectables found in candlesticks throughout the game. A twiddle on the joypad exerts greater control over the direction of the whipcrack, and it's possible to swing across chasms by lashing onto overhead protuberances. Besides the knives, axes and holy water phials that featured in earlier games, Richter packs an 'item crash' or smart bomb effect to clear the screen of awkward-to-reach foes.

The excellent news for British gamers is that *Dracula XX* will receive an official release in the UK. Jon Sloan of Konami UK confirmed to Super Play that a PAL version would appear later this year, retitled *Vampire's Kiss*. We'll be looking forward to covering it in greater depth soon.

Konami's designers clearly haven't lost their touch. The atmospheric graphics surpass even those of Capcom's recent *Demon's Crest* (above).

A NOBLE BLOODLINE

The first game in the series appeared on the Nintendo Entertainment System back in 1987, when Konami released *Castlevania Adventure*. Two more games and Game Boy conversions followed, but we've seen nothing on SNES since the excellent (but aged) *Super Castlevania IV*.

NES
Castlevania Adventure **May 1987**
Castlevania II: Simon's Quest
Dec 1988
Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse
Sep 1990

GAME BOY
Castlevania: The Adventure
Dec 1989
Castlevania II: Belmont's Revenge
Aug 1991

SNES
Super Castlevania IV **Dec 91**

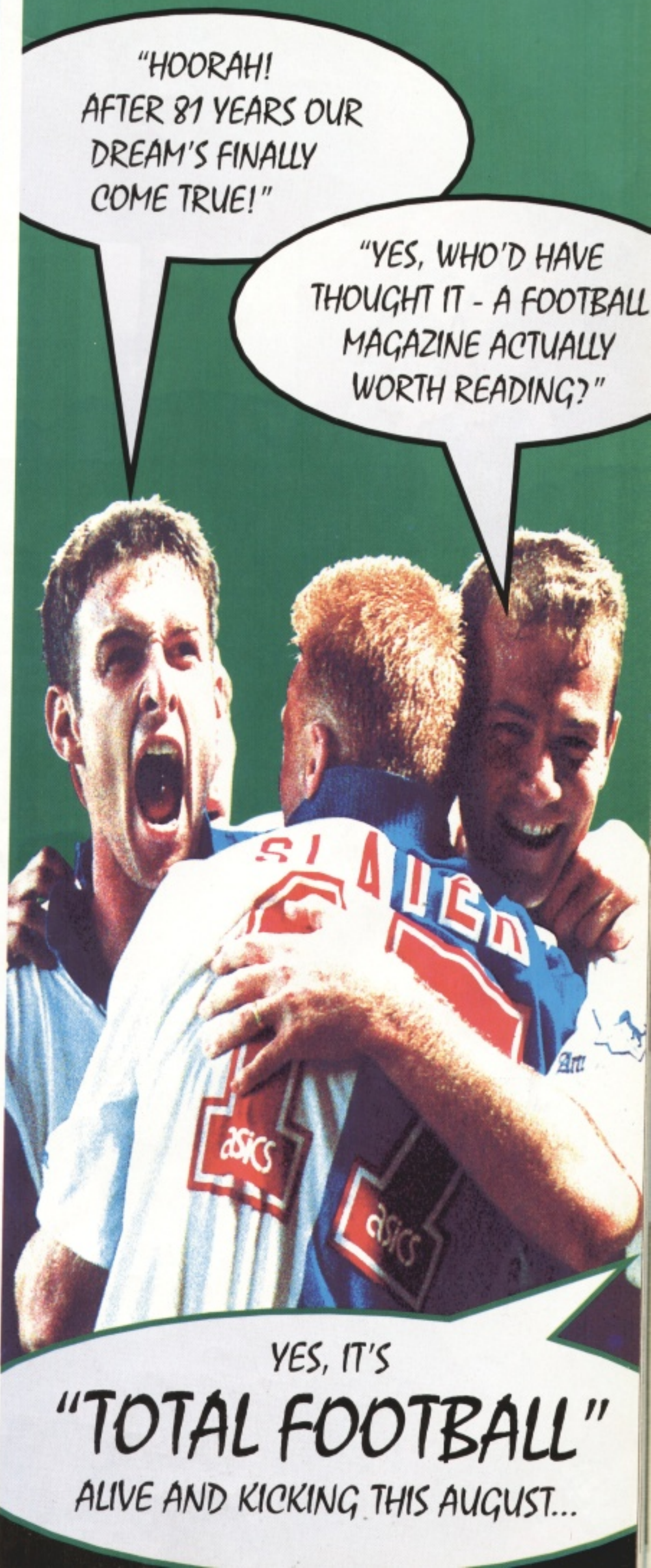
***Castlevania IV* -slow to get going, but an eventual delight. And as tough as...**

... Game Boy *Castlevania*. Whipcrack away, whipcrack away, whipcrack away.

coders the West Brothers – who worked for Vivid Image on Street Racer – get a tiny plug.

Back in the Eighties, when one person could write and code an entire game alone, players looked for names like Jeff Minter in the same way that horror buffs look for Roger Corman. But nowadays, unless you're Shigeru Miyamoto or Archer Maclean, anonymity reigns. Shouldn't publishers make efforts to credit their unsung heroes and heroines?

Coders get little credit in *Street Racer* whilst company logos are becoming more extravagant (right).


"HOORAH! AFTER 81 YEARS OUR DREAM'S FINALLY COME TRUE!"
"YES, WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT IT - A FOOTBALL MAGAZINE ACTUALLY WORTH READING?"
YES, IT'S
"TOTAL FOOTBALL"
ALIVE AND KICKING THIS AUGUST...

Headstrong but heroic, the young hero of *Lodoss*, Pern, almost doesn't make it past the second episode. But after donning his father's armour and joining up with the rest of the group, he slowly starts to learn how to fight and not to take stupid risks. It may not be the most original storyline, but it's rarely done this well.

She may be 160 years old, but in Elfen terms she's still just a teenager. She joins the party mainly because of Pern and, although they're always fighting, throughout the story the two become increasingly close.

Anime takes the hit points

ANIME WORLD

Pronounced 'ah-nee-may'

Record Of Lodoss War

by P J Evans

Anyone who reads *Super Play* regularly (and if not, why not?) will know how hugely interwoven the Japanese media industry is. TV shows become computer games, while games become comics. Films are influenced by animation and financed by toy companies, while anime takes its visual style from manga and finally ends up as a computer game again. Everything feeds off everything else, like an audio-visual ecosystem.

A perfect example of this process is *Record of Lodoss War*. Players of TSR's *Dungeons & Dragons* (not the computer version, mind, but the original paper-based role-playing game) will know what *Lodoss War* is all about: set on the mythical island kingdom of Lodoss, the story is a high-fantasy saga in the best tradition of Tolkien, with elves, dwarves, orcs and dragons, knights in improbable armour and big, big swords. It all began in the fertile imagination of one Ryo Mizuno, who doodled out the first concepts for the saga while in high school, sketching out an entire fantasy world and the characters who lived and died therein.

Aside from designing pocket universes, Mizuno had an interest in games, and joined a gaming club called Group SNE. The members of the club enjoyed games of pretty much every kind: they followed sports, poured thousands of yen a week into pachinko machines, and played computer games of such fledgling simplicity as to reduce any child of today's SNES generation to hollow-eyed hysterics. In addition to this, they had a serious thing for role-playing games.

At that time, few people in Japan had even heard of RPGs. America (and Britain, to a lesser degree) were enjoying the rise of role-playing:

The thirteen parts of *Record Of Lodoss War* are now available in France and have just started to be released in the USA by Central Park Media, so look out for a UK version soon. It's well worth it.

Dungeons & Dragons, *Traveller*, *Runequest*, and all the other greats were being played avidly, and barely a student dorm or schoolkid's room was free of the rattle and click of those funky polyhedral dice. Those were the days when trading cards were still things you got in packets of bubblegum, and all you needed to step into another world were some friends and the ability to read. (Excuse me, please, while I dab away a nostalgic tear.)

So, giddy with hit points and armour classes, Mizuno dusted off *Lodoss* and presented it to Group SNE as a role-playing campaign. The club members were so impressed that they set about designing a system of rules to use the saga to its best advantage – *Record of Lodoss War*: *The RPG* was born. Later on, Mizuno got the chance to give *Lodoss* to the world when he wrote it up as an article for a gaming magazine. It was received so well that the Group SNE system ended up being released as a commercially available game.

The 13-part *Record of Lodoss War* OAV series came out at the end of 1989, directed by Akinoi Nagao and sporting character designs by Battle Angel's Nobuteru Yuuki, who, incidently, created the characters for Squaresoft's *Secret of Mana 2*. By this time Mizuno had published some of his stories as novels through Kadokawa Shoten, publishers of the brilliantly-coloured *Newtype* magazine, and also in the running were a computer game, a manga series, and the inevitable wave of merchandise. Ryo Mizuno's pocket universe was being enjoyed all over the world.

As with any fantasy worth its salt, *Record of Lodoss War* begins with a legend: in particular, the legend of Falis and Falalis, two gods who waged terrible war on each other for centuries until only two goddesses were left standing; Marfa (good, wears white, kind to animals), and Kardis (black leather, listens to Tanita Tikaram, eats weevils). The final battle ended up with both girls keeling over and making heroic dying speeches: Kardis used her last gasp to curse the land of Ayacrust forever, and Marfa, realising that this kind of fall-out just doesn't go away, split the affected chunk off to protect the rest of the continent.

The cursed island became known as Lodoss, and isn't a nice place at all.

Of course, goddesses never die, they just hang around and cause trouble. After hundreds of years Kardis resurrects herself as a Demon God, living in a labyrinth on the island of Marmo. She then proceeds to chomp her way through hundreds of hopeful adventurers, before being finally defeated by seven heroes (reducing the number to six in the process). The six all go their separate ways after the battle, but one, Beld, has been seduced by the Dark Side and is now threatening the whole of Lodoss with his evil ways. Enter six new heroes to step into the ring and take over where the old ones left off, helped or hindered by the old six and a bewildering cast of kings, dragons, wizards, and pretty much everyone from the *D&D* rulebook.

Lodoss Wars has a set of central characters so archetypal to fantasy role-playing that during fight sequences you can almost hear the hit points dropping. The hero is Pern, a fighter, staggering under the weight of his dad's armour and working his way up the level system as he goes along. Joining him on his travels are Eto, a cleric (complete with Turn Undead spells); Deedlit, a cute elf with a gift for white magic; Gim, a dwarf fighter who carries an axe (obviously) and doesn't get on with elves; a wizard called Slayn (staff and all); and Woodchuck, a thief.

The first episode, which actually takes place halfway through the story, is simply a session of *D&D* on the screen, with the player characters making their way through a dungeon system, fighting gargoyles and such, picking up treasure, falling into traps, and fighting a 100m long dragon. It's so good that it makes you want to go out and buy a set of *D&D* rules right now.

Record of Lodoss War is still pretty difficult to get hold of over here, But hopefully it won't be long before somebody snaps it up. It should have been TSR – they would have made a bomb. In the meantime, I'd like to extend big thanks to Helen McCarthy of *AUK Magazine*, without whom this article would have been a big hole in the page. See you next month.

Vanguard the evil sorcerer is out to resurrect the goddess Kardis and grab some of her power for himself.

The six main heroes in *Lodoss War* couldn't be more stereotyped if they tried. The young hero, a wizard, a cleric, a thief, an Elf and a Dwarf. All are given the magic anime touch by chara designer Noberteru Yuuki.

ANIME CONTACTS

Anime UK Magazine (£2.70) and ***Manga Mania*** (£1.95) are now both available from all good newsagents.

Prehistorik Man

Titus ● 8 Mbits

2.5 to 3 million years ago – that's the Palaeolithic period, history fans – Neanderthal man roamed the Earth. And 1995 is the year when Neanderthal man has been given new life. Yes, Titus have resurrected one of the old devils and made him star in a video game called *Prehistorik Man*.

Those of you possessing a frighteningly in-depth knowledge of the Amstrad CPC (ulp – not many, we hope) might have recognised this as an upgrade of the acclaimed 8-bit game *Prehistorik*. Later it appeared on the Amiga too, we believe. Obviously 'Prehistorik' is a specially contrived spelling mistake to make the chap more cool – as if a sort of inverted intelligence makes the prehistoric hero more hip. But, we digress...

Sam is the prehistoric man in question and he's on a quest to save his village. All the food supplies have been stolen by pesky dinosaurs – the fiends! It's the usual scenario and, we've saved the scariest bit until last, it's a platform game. Yeah, we thought they died out with the dinosaurs too, but we wouldn't want to appear narrow-minded...

Gat a grasp of it and you'll be able to travel far and wide with this.

Apart from the bizarre idea of making the characters talk as if they are doing rather poor impersonations of Stephen Hawkings, this game looks to be a cartoony treat. With bright and cheery graphics, it even offers some distinctly *Mario*-esque gameplay elements. The best of these, inspired by the cape in *Super Mario World*, has to be the hang-gliding section where you can fly and dive around. This bit seems quite tricky to get the hang of (get it?), but it's a lot of fun. Other 'vehicles' you'll have to learn to use include Sam's pogo stick, his stone mono-cycle and raft.

The game comprises 23 big levels, four hidden bonus worlds and loads of secret areas. Over 20 programmers, artists and sound engineers have been hard at it for two and a half years. But you'll really have to wait until the review to see whether or not all their hard work has paid off.

Scary, boss dragon with spikes. Not friendly to humans.

The ice kingdom looks brilliant, with cute penguins pottering around. They're evil though.

SNIPPETS

No Bull

If the recent heatwaves have left you sweating and gasping, spare a thought for the meteorological hell that is Summer in Japan. It's already getting sticky-hot in the tenements of Tokyo, where our Shinjuku correspondent reports that most public vending machines are now geared to raking in the yen on ice-cold canned drinks. The most popular brand at the moment is fiercely debated, but it seems to be a choice of either 'Calpis' (er, try pronouncing it) or the isotonic 'Pocari Sweat'. Mmm, yum.

Record Of Lodoss War

Although the news came too late for Peter Evans to include it in his Anime World column, we've discovered that a *Record of Lodoss War* game is on its way for the Super Famicom.

Like *Dracula XX*, it's a conversion of a successful title on the PC Engine. You won't be surprised to hear that it's an RPG, based as it is on the acclaimed fantasy anime, and scenes from the series intersperse the action to further the story.

Meet Pern from *Lodoss War*.

Sidereal Vulpine The Second, More Like

One game that won't be in Nintendo's summer line-up is *Starfox II*, the sequel to the 1993's 3D FX chip space shoot-'em-up.

The Argonaut / Nintendo collaboration was proudly displayed at the Winter CES in Las Vegas, but has now been held back until early 1996. 'Necessary reprogramming' has been cited as the cause of the delay, although no specific reasons have been given.

More news as and when we hear it.

The Devil's Din-Dins

Most Japanese games like to squeeze in a weird story or a plot where none is needed, and we were a little disappointed to see *Kirby's Avalanche* had been sanitised for US audiences. But we've seen few plots as bizarre as that of Banpresto's *Super Nazo Puyo*. Playing as either Rulue or Arle (the girl from *Puyo Puyo*), the goal of the game is to make the greatest curry... To do this you must go to town and ask the shopkeepers to provide you with the various spicy ingredients for a truly delicious hot dish. Before they will part with their wares, each shopkeeper sets you a puzzle stage involving multi-coloured *Puyo* blobs. On your shopping trip you may also be challenged by monsters who can smell the spices in your basket. Play as Arle and you're cooking the curry for yourself; whereas Rulue appears to be conjuring up a spicy dish for her dear friend, Satan. Best not ask, really.

Your goal is to create the ultimate mind-blowing curry.

SUPER DROPZONE WINNERS

A couple of issues ago we ran a competition in conjunction with Sony to win 10 copies of *Super Dropzone* and 10 pairs of tickets for a spot of blasting down at your nearest Laser Quest centre. And now that the long-awaited closing date has come to pass, we can give the winners a name-check... D. Parnell and Carol Place (both from North Yorkshire), D. Dumelow from Horsham, Paul Daniel, not to be confused with... *(yes, yes, get on with it – Ed)* from Bromley, M. Russell from Northwood, Carol Doherty from Darlington, Michael Shutlar of Ponteland, SV Jones from the village which is home to the best tourist attraction in the whole of the south-west of England – Wookey Hole, Krishna Gadhia from Leicester and Darryl Robertson from Bargoed in Mid Glamorgan are the lucky ten who took the time to send in entries. And the answer to the compo... simple! Archer Maclean was the well-known programmer we were talking about.

Ten *Super Play* readers will soon be receiving a copy of *Super Dropzone* in the post...

MORE WINNERS!

Way, way back, many moons ago when James was the editor, we offered you the chance to win a load of top *Green Legend Ran* goodies. Five winners have been selected by a secret method known only to us and they are: Mr. Parkes from Reading, J. Lee from Stowmarket, Michael Tsang from Wolverhampton, Alex Boucher from Stansted and Robert Sims from Wandsworth. They'll soon be receiving bags of booty from Pioneer. Hurrah!

ITS... THE SUPER QUIZ!

As an antidote to the sickening political corruption revealed in the recent 'cash for questions' government scandal, *Super Play* is proud to bring you the unswervingly honest and truly righteous Super Quiz. No prizes, unless you prize your own console knowledge. No reward, because being gamewise is its own reward. And absolutely NO CASH for getting any of these questions, because it's just for fun.

Easy

1) What's the name for a 22-hit combo in *Killer Instinct*?
2) Who is Diddy Kong's new girlfriend?
3) On what format did the first *Seiken Densetsu* game appear?

Medium

1) What's different about the X & Y buttons on an official American SNES pad?
2) Name all the modes of air travel in *Pilotwings*.
3) What's the name of the land where *Zelda III* is set?

Hard

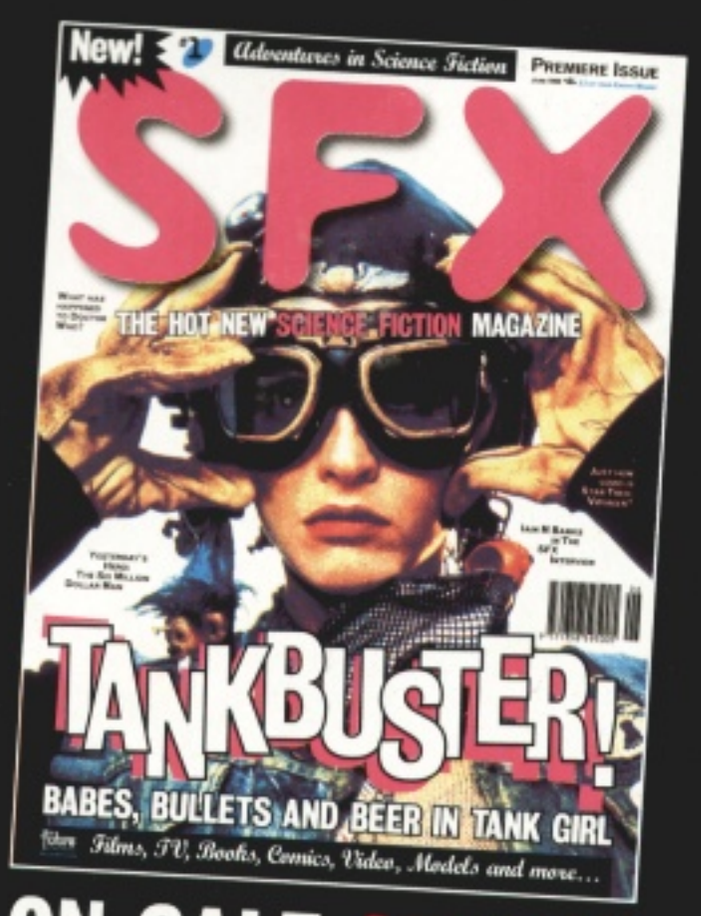
1) "This is the first adventure of our new hero, 'Captain Falcon'. Little is known about him, except that he was born in the city of 'Port Town' and has become the galaxy's greatest prize hunter." Which early Super Famicom cartridge featured these words on its label?
2) *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* was an upgraded sequel to which Interplay racing game (in full)?
3) *Final Fight*'s Haggar holds the title of mayor – but for which city?

Don't write in, because you'll look silly. The answers are on p. 82, see.

RESISTANCE IS USELESS!

HAS DOCTOR WHO GOT A FUTURE?

FIND OUT IN ISSUE 1 OF SFX, THE SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE



ON SALE 23 MAY

Future Publishing

Films, TV, Books, Comics, Video, Models and more...

LIVE FROM HELL CITY

By Nic di Costanzo

READ THE BOOK, SEE THE FILM, BUY THE SHIRT

While we get the umpteenth re-run of *The Dreamstone*, our Japanese chums get new series of *Street Fighter II* and *Mobile Suit Gundam*. Are we jealous?

Looking quite a bit different from his first anime appearance in the *SFII* Movie, Ryu's outfit looks in need of an iron.

In the West we're used to seeing elements and characters from the pop culture media of television, films, CDs and comic books occasionally crossing over into the more esoteric world of video games. Movie licences and tie-ins are commonplace, and some of last year's most successful games were based on feature-length Disney productions.

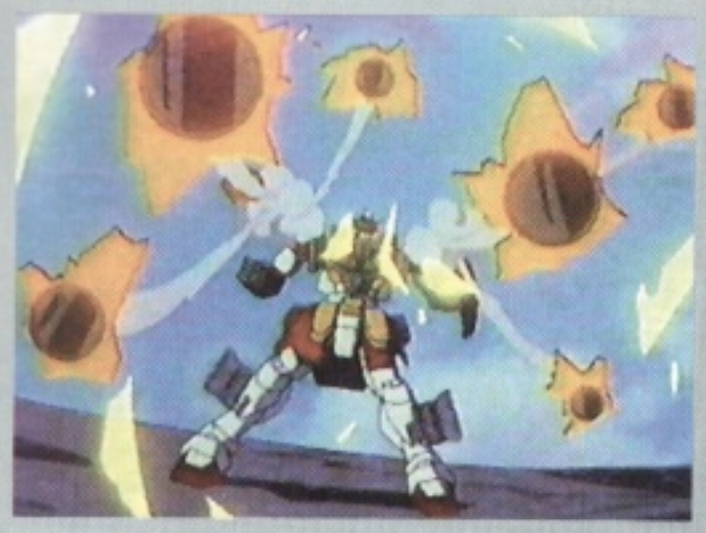
In Japan, however, videogaming is a far more intrinsic and reciprocating part of the manga and anime scene. If a manga comic strip should become famous, you won't have to wait long to discover that an anime movie based on it is due to appear. And if the anime proves equally popular, a video game is never far behind that.

Employ the services of a professional but affordable animation studio like Toei for a 30 minute movie and they'll charge you around 13 million yen to produce it (¥13,000,000 is almost £100,000). That might sound expensive to the layman, and misleadingly suggests that the TV channels have billions to throw away when they can afford to schedule such a show on a weekly basis for an

Reflecting the 'when they were young' nature of the new *SFII* TV series, Chunners gets a whole new outfit and a haircut.

As you would expect, the TV *SFII* has more than its fair share of fisticuffs.

All Ken wants is a quiet drink, but as you would expect that's not very likely.



The mobile suits in *Gundam* get more outlandish with each series, and even more unfeasibly armed too.

A duller paint job indicates enemy mobile suit cannon fodder. Much like a security guard wearing a red jumper in Star Trek, these are always the first to go.

Don't recognise the suit type? It's labelled on screen.

Right: Yet more potential model sales in *Gundam*.

entire year, with no re-runs and no gaps between one series and the next.

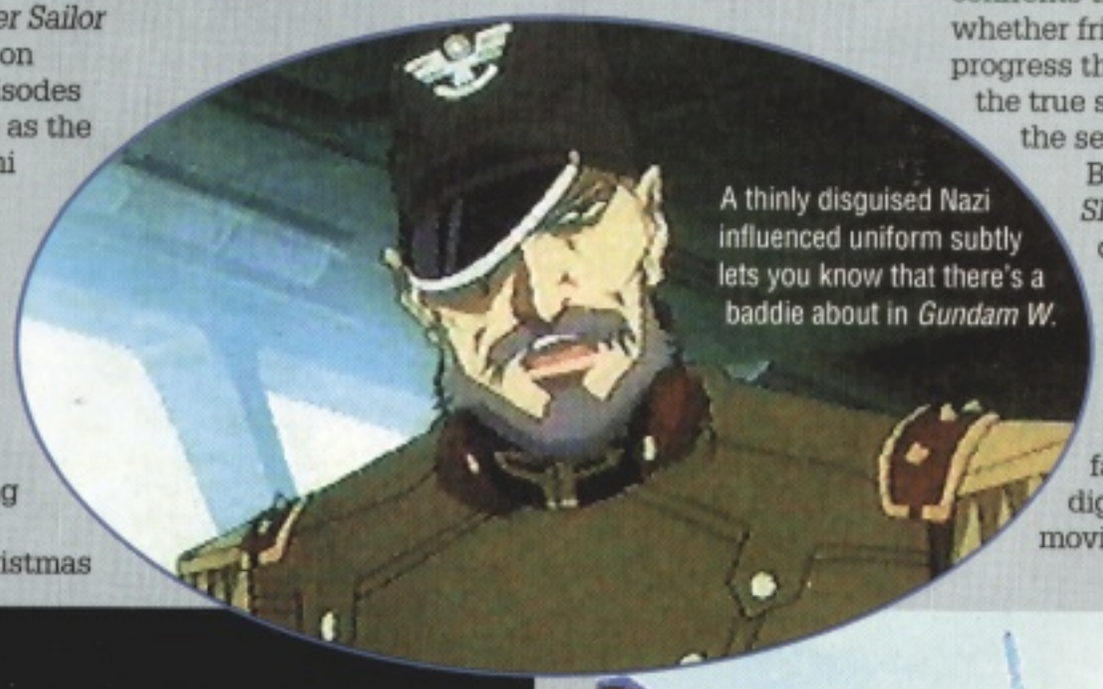
But that would be to miss the real point of these movies. When a popular anime show picks up high ratings and a loyal audience, the money to be made from merchandise and licensed products – toys, books, games and the like – is phenomenal. It's in all of the related paraphernalia of T-shirts, SD miniatures, glossy souvenir edition books, licensed video games, soft toys, pencil cases, theme music CDs and collector's cards that the real profits exist. The anime show is really nothing more than a marketing exercise, and for this reason the TV channels usually have to pay no more than 6 million yen – less than half the original production costs – for half an hour of anime. The money initially lost in underselling your series to a TV channel will be returned severalfold in sales of merchandise and licensing royalties.

So the TV show you watch every week is really an advertisement? Many viewers could cope with that. Hey, Bandai's *Power Rangers* licence wasn't exactly damaged by the crudness of its scripts. But the marketing tactic is far more insidious than that. Take *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon*, one of the most popular series on Japanese television. Although the episodes cover the same ground and storylines as the manga strip that appears in Nakayoshi magazine, the TV series is kept uniformly behind the comic book by a month so as not to threaten Nakayoshi's sales. The introduction of new characters is also closely regulated: rather than being the idea of the writers or directors – tch, what a suggestion – it's a tightly controlled and coordinated device for maintaining viewer interest and promoting new ranges of licensed goodies during Christmas and summer vacations. The strategy has paid off handsomely, with the revenue from *Sailor Moon* merchandising exceeding ¥100 billion in three years.

The *Street Fighter* TV show is an odd example, because the game came first but carried no plot or accepted scenario. This ought to have given the animation studio complete freedom to create new storylines and to dream up possible incidents in the characters' lives: it didn't. Capcom's business interests and its desire to promote the forthcoming coin-op *SF Zero* meant strict stipulations on what would and wouldn't appear in the show. Let's take a closer look at what's currently on offer on Japanese TV...

Street Fighter 2 V

YTV, NTV channels, Mondays 7.00pm



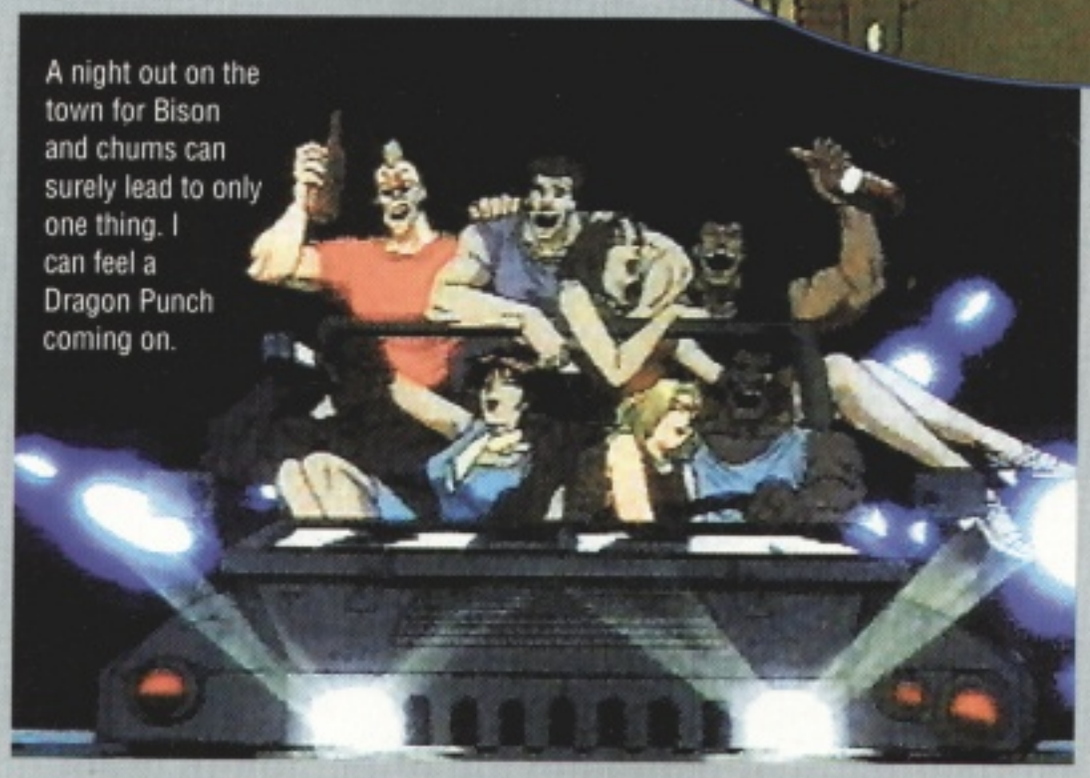
A thinly disguised Nazi influenced uniform subtly lets you know that there's a baddie about in *Gundam W*.

'V'? Where does that V come from? According to director Gisaburou Sugihi, the V stands for Victory - Victory Versus Television. But it could also mean Voyage, because the main two characters of the story, Ryu and Ken, spend the whole series travelling around the globe.

The story is set 10 years in the past, when the two dragon-punching world warriors are still very young and inexperienced in the martial arts. Although they possess a strong and passionate 'fighting spirit', they lack the necessary understanding and strength of mind to discipline their skills. As a result they both lose battles to Guile, whose military training gives him the edge.

Realising they must improve all aspects of their abilities, Ryu and Ken set off around the world in search of other determined warriors to assist or challenge them. Each new episode confronts them with another fighter who, whether friendly or belligerent, can in some way progress their training. But will they discover the true spirit of the martial arts by the end of the series? *[Ooh, I wonder - Ed].*

Besides the usual familiar faces from *SF2*, Ryu and Ken also bump into characters like Kazuyoshi Ishii, Andy Fugu and Kenya Sawada. The lattermost is none other than Captain Sawada, who appeared briefly in *Streetfighter The Movie* to introduce him to the game's Western fans before his debut in the new digitised coin-op game of the movie (see SP32). Here in Japan,



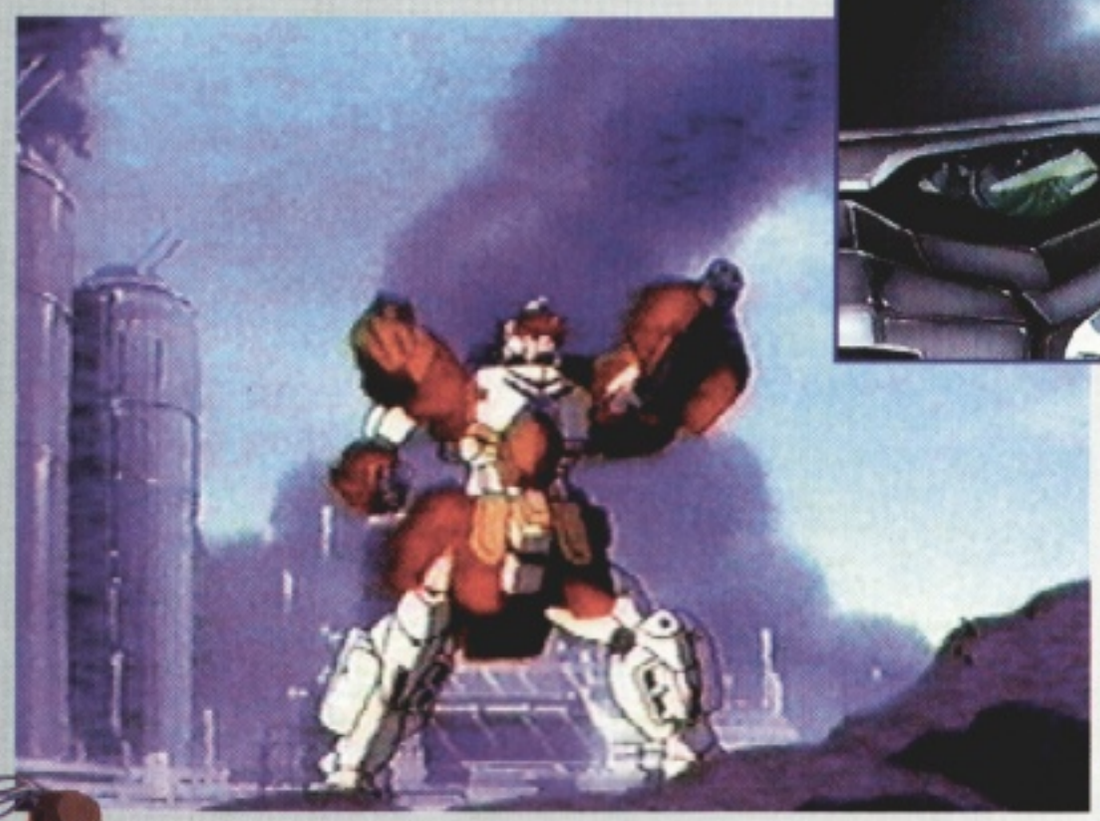
A night out on the town for Bison and chums can surely lead to only one thing. I can feel a Dragon Punch coming on.

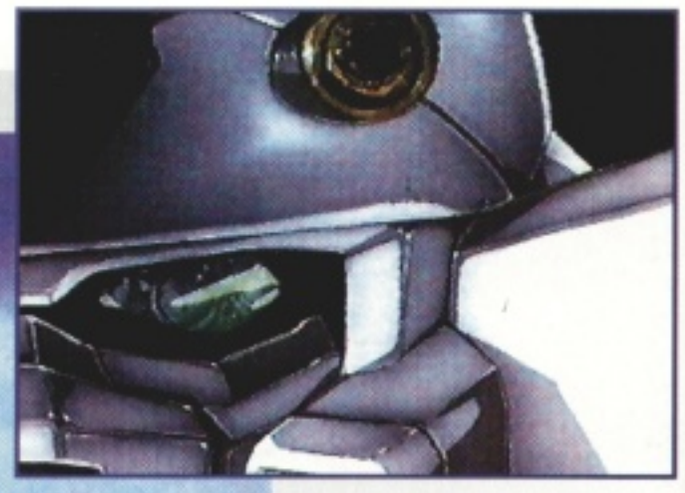
Gundam always had a way with letters and numbers- Z, ZZ, F-91, 0080, 0083, G, V and now W.

his timely inclusion in the TV show is just another example of the marketing people at work behind the scenes.

The importance of the series in Capcom's sales plans is perhaps more apparent in the attention to detail lavished upon every aspect of the show. The company engaged the services of Shinichi Tokairin, a famous Japanese master of the martial arts, to examine the combat sequences at planning stage. His wisdom and experience enlightened the series' animators with the finer points of fighting technique.

Indeed, the studio even went so far as to employ a fashion co-ordinator to advise on the characters' wardrobes. Chun Li has had a drastic but rather fetching haircut, whilst the smart suit disguising Ken's muscular frame is nothing less than Armani...





Beware the eye of the Gundam. Well the visor camera anyway.

Left:The law of Gundam fights dictates that whenever two or more mobile suits are gathered together, mass destruction will result.

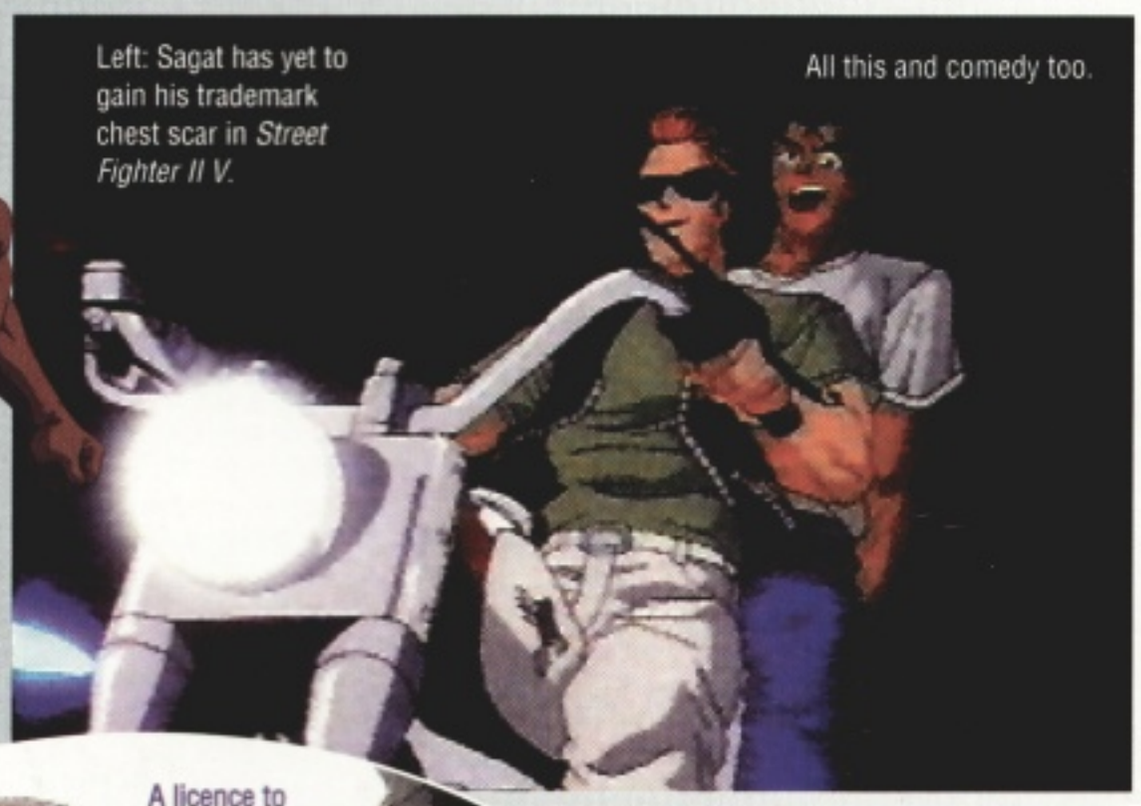
Gundam W

ANB (TV-Asahi) channel, Fridays 5.00pm

Gundam's been going since 1979 – too long in the eyes of some fans, and the quality of the series is undoubtedly deteriorating as it becomes a repetitive robot bashfest. But the status it acquired in its halcyon days, with strong characters and involving plots, was enough to create a small industry of manga, model kits, miniatures, technical data manuals featuring diagrams and preliminary sketches of the hardware, and of course video games. *Gundam*'s following is now almost secondary to its value as an advertising campaign.

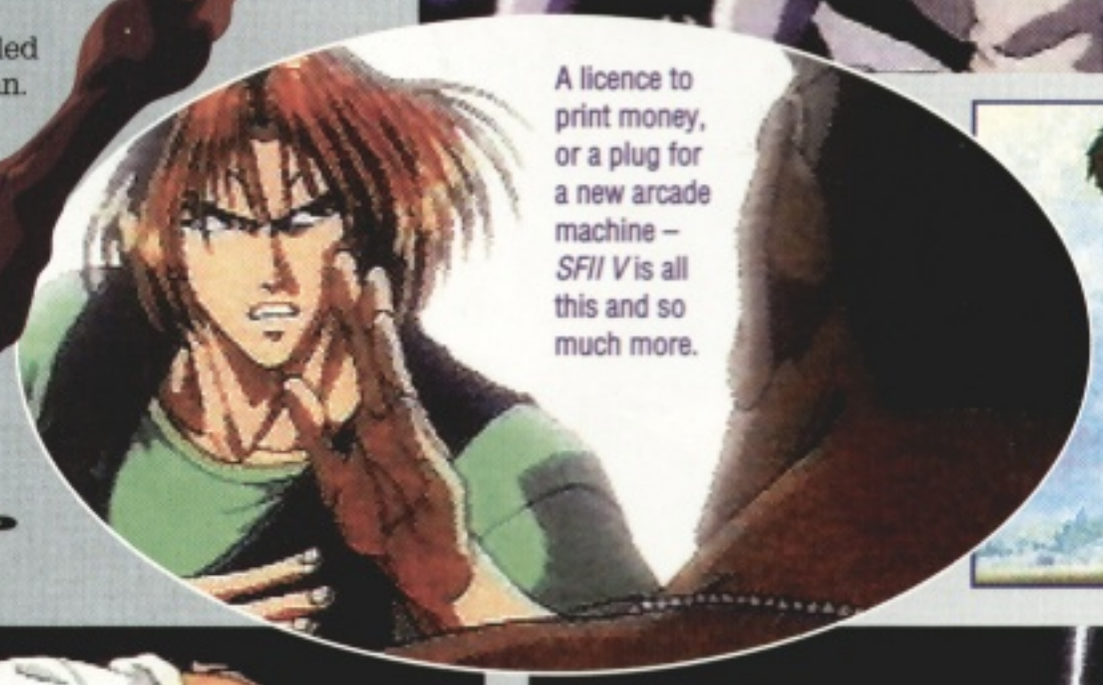
The real hero of the latest show is Gundam Wing; although you might be distracted by its pilot, a young man called Hiiro Yui, and his girlfriend Lilina Dorian. The peace of the system has been threatened by the Earth Sphere Unity Union, which intends to unify Earth with its neighbouring planets by force.

So as Hiiro and his Gundam Wing do battle with the ESUU forces, nicknamed Specials, in a regular Friday evening slot, the question to ask is not 'will there be a video game based on it', but 'just how many *Gundam* video games will we see?'



Left: Sagat has yet to gain his trademark chest scar in *Street Fighter II V*.

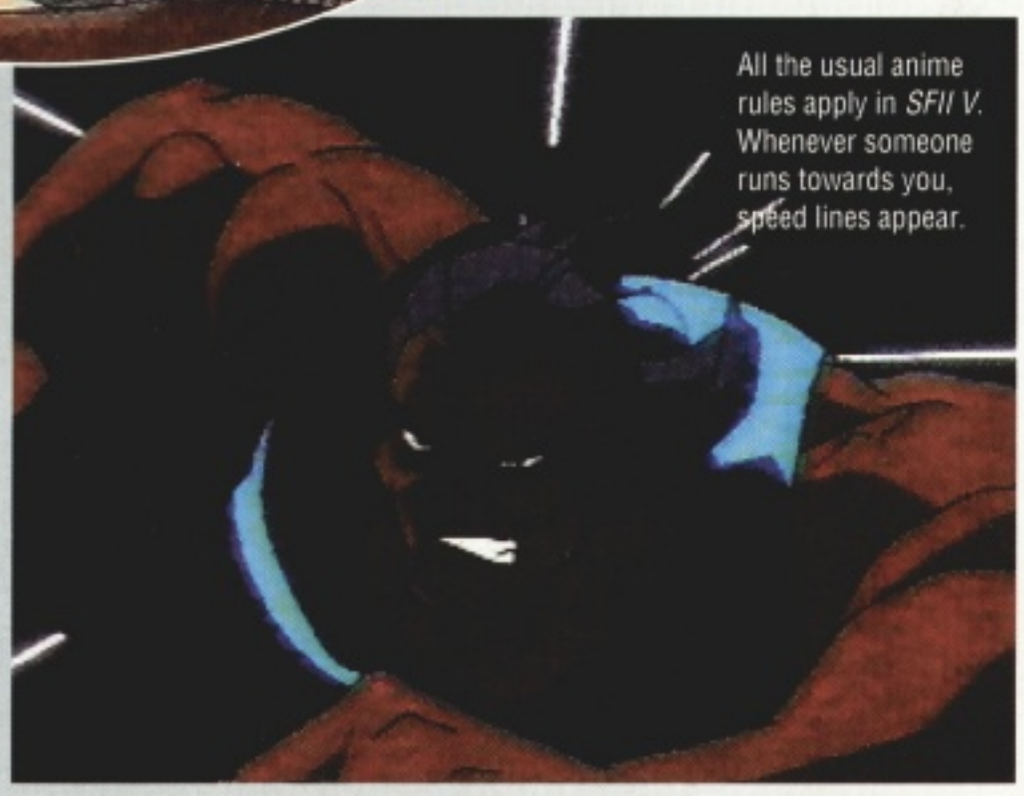
All this and comedy too.



A licence to print money, or a plug for a new arcade machine – *SFII V* is all this and so much more.

Even in Street Fighter there are calm moments. This is a Japanese series after all.

Ken and Ryu are sparring partners in the old days, when the *Street Fighter* TV series takes place.



All the usual anime rules apply in *SFII V*. Whenever someone runs towards you, speed lines appear.

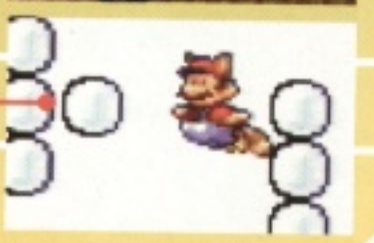
THE CHARTS

For weekly UK SNES chart updates you can either tune into Digitiser, Teletext page 470, Channel 4 or use your Dad's PC to read the Super Play page on the Internet at http://www.futurenet.co.uk

ELSPA – European Leisure Software Publishers Association Ltd

OFFICIAL GALLUP UK SUPER NINTENDO CHART

1	INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER	Konami	SP30 92%
2	UNIRALLY	Nintendo	SP29 85%
3	DONKEY KONG COUNTRY	Nintendo	SP27 90%
4	STARWING	Nintendo	SP7 93%
5	JURASSIC PARK 2	Ocean	SP27 83%
6	SUPER BOMBERMAN 2	Hudson Soft/Virgin	SP21 91%
7	ZELDA 3 – A Link To The Past	Nintendo	SP2 93%
8	SHAQ-FU	Ocean	SP N/A
9	MARIO ALL-STARS	Nintendo	SP11 96%
10	DESERT FIGHTER	Kixx	SP N/A



SWEDISH CHART

Compiled by Tobias Bjarneby and Super Power (Hi!)

1	DONKEY KONG COUNTRY	Nintendo
2	EARTHWORM JIM	Virgin
3	SUPER METROID	Nintendo
4	SUPER PUNCH-OUT	Nintendo
5	BLACKHAWK	Interplay
6	NHL '95	ZZ
7	ZELDA – Link To the Past	Nintendo
8	SUPER INDIANA JONES	JVC
9	THE LION KING	Virgin
10	SUPER RETURN OF THE JEDI	JVC

This is the chart as our Swedish friends see it and how it appears in *Super Play*'s sister magazine – *Super Power*. Not too much difference here to our own UK charts (albeit a while ago). *Super Metroid* was a particular favourite of ours last year and a game which we thought should have done a lot better. As in many countries on the continent, there's a great *Dragon Ball* following and an interest in anime and manga in general. As usual *FFIII* is the top import choice of the Swedes.

FRENCH CHART

Le hit parade des jeux videos français (Salut, Sumo!)

1	DRAGON BALL 3	Bandai
2	DONKEY KONG COUNTRY	Nintendo
3	SECRET OF MANA	Nintendo/Squaresoft
4	INT SUP STAR SOCCER	Konami
5	LE ROI LION (The Lion King)	Virgin
6	EARTHWORM JIM	Virgin
7	MORTAL KOMBAT II	Acclaim
8	JAMES POND 2	US Gold
9	SUPER STREETFIGHTER II	Capcom
10	LEGEND	Sony

They may only be twenty miles from us but such is the anime following in France that *Dragon Ball Z 3* has shot straight in at No.1 – can you see that happening here? The *Secret of Mana*'s presence at No.3 is probably down to an official French translation which was actually completed before the UK PAL conversion. Over here we had all played the American version and therefore the official English version didn't do as well as it could have done. Better luck with *SOM 2*, eh?

JAPANESE CHART

Compiled by Famicom Tsushin and Wil Overton

1	CHRONO TRIGGER	Squaresoft
2	SUP FORMATION SOCCER	Human
3	SUPER DONKEY KONG	Nintendo
4	ROCKMAN 7	Capcom
5	DRAGON BALL Z	Bandai
6	SUPER ROBOT WAR 4	Banpresto
7	DERBY STALLION III	ASCII
8	WINNING POST 2	Koei
9	RPG – SUPER DANTE	ASCII
10	J-LEAGUE SOCCER '95	Hudson Soft

Chrono Trigger still reigns king at No.1, even beating *Tekken* on the PlayStation and *Daytona* on the Saturn. Elsewhere things are as expected and the terrible horse-racing duo still lurk around the bottom half of the chart. The new *Dragon Ball* game is actually an RPG with isometric battle scenes (like *Front Mission*) whilst *Super Robot War* takes loads of famous anime robots like *Gundam* and *Mazinger Z*, then super deforms them and chucks them all into a 24 Mbit strategy war game. Chances of us seeing it are nil.

FANTA

3D modelling gives this month's RPGs a new visual slant.

Mystic Ark
Enix ● 32 Mbit ● July 14

They may exchange polite compliments in public, but behind the scenes there's a fierce battle being waged. Such is the rivalry between Square and Enix of Japan that as soon as one company announces a new game, you can safely wager your left lung that the other will respond similarly with news of a title in progress. Nothing illustrates it better than this month's press bonanza regarding *Secret of Mana 2*. Although the game's release is undecided and very likely some months off, the revelation was very clearly intended to eclipse the recent announcement of *Mystic Ark* by Enix. But *Fantasy Quest* cannot be swayed so easily...

An odd behind-the-party view shows magic attacks coming straight at you (above)

The Ark of the title has nothing to do with floods and cubits and two by two, nor the box of divine wrath that Indiana Jones managed to mislay; it refers instead to a magical sprite or spirit which, when placed inside an inanimate doll, can bring it to life.

In the middle of the world lies a closed and forbidden island. A shrine therein, rumoured to be the palace of the gods and the resting place of spirits, is the gateway to seven mystic worlds. It is here you start off playing a boy or a girl (your choice) unto whom an Ark, and thus life, has been accidentally bestowed.

During the game you'll meet others like yourself. Characters like Milene, a beautiful sorceress; Kamioo, a human/devil hybrid with a short temper; the iron man Laks, an armoured robot warrior; the ninja in traditional shadow-black suit and mask known as Tokio; Lee Shan, the young and mysterious girl in foreign garb; and Masha, the gentle cleric. All of them are revived by the gift of an Ark, seven of which must be found in the seven worlds of the game. Perform this task and you will be granted reincarnation, rebirth in the world of the humans.

Although it's an RPG, with all the combat and fantasy paraphernalia you'd expect, there's a heavy-handed puzzle element that's reminiscent of old-fashioned computer adventures (and, in some respects, 7th Guest). You must be ready to search for hidden items and discover their purpose. Furthermore, each world must be 'solved' before the shrine will allow you to take the pathway to the next. We were intrigued to discover that one of the later worlds is called The World of Fruit, where the ordinary citizens dwell in huge vegetables and fruits; the first town you visit is called Water Melon. *[Er, talk about something else – Ed].*

Digitised scenes and some superbly solid three-dimensional sprites help to give Mystic Ark its unique look, whilst the character designs by Yamada Akihiro

Whether you play a male or a female, Yamada Akihiro's chara design is strikingly androgynous.

The Shrine leads to all the other worlds (read: game levels).

are refreshingly subtle. With the news that the long-awaited *Dragon Quest VI* won't appear until much later in the year, Enix clearly hopes that *Mystic Ark*'s July release will keep its fans satiated until then.

Maten Densetsu (Legend of Maten)
Takara ● Summer '95

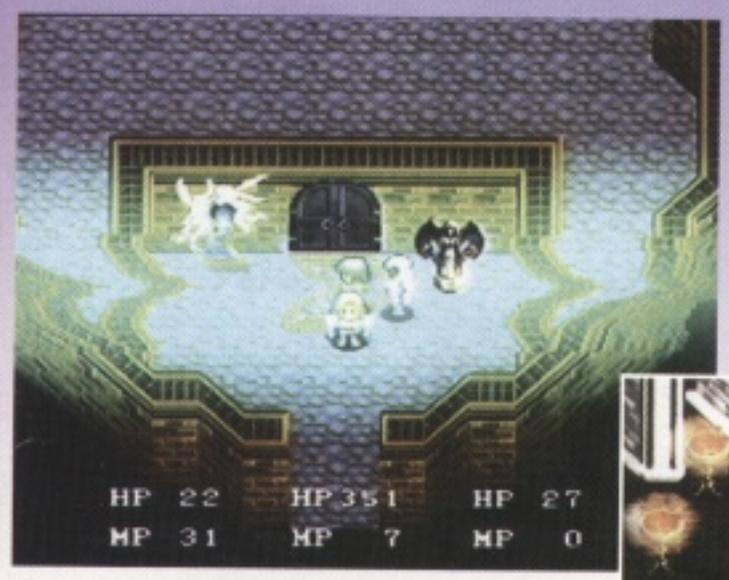
The Japanese often seem to have a very doom-laden view of the future, and Takara's vision of the 21st Century is no exception. A temporal rift has torn Japan from the face of the Earth and plunged it into another universe, levelling Shinjuku. Choosing to play one of five characters, you learn of a way to negate the catastrophe and restore Japan to its former self: a way which inevitably involves wandering across post-catastrophic Japan with a selection of weapons with which to see off the extra-dimensional aggressors who have come to investigate this strange new land...

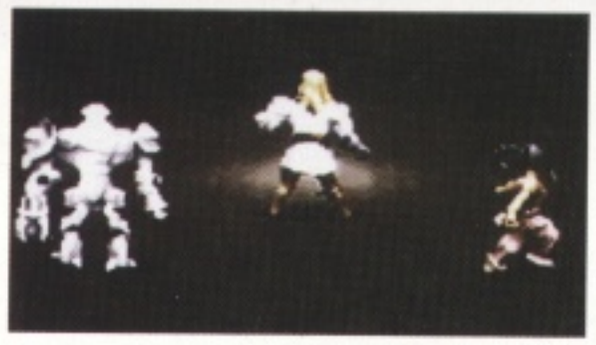
The game features two distinct types of monsters, mixing those from oriental mythology with those from Western myths. The interesting twist to *Maten Densetsu* is that all of them have been created from real models, filmed in a studio with stop-motion animation to provide digitised frames of movement for its battle

To say he was built like a brick outhouse would be rather too literal. Let's rock!

ASY QUEST

by Nic di Costanzo and Zy Nicholson

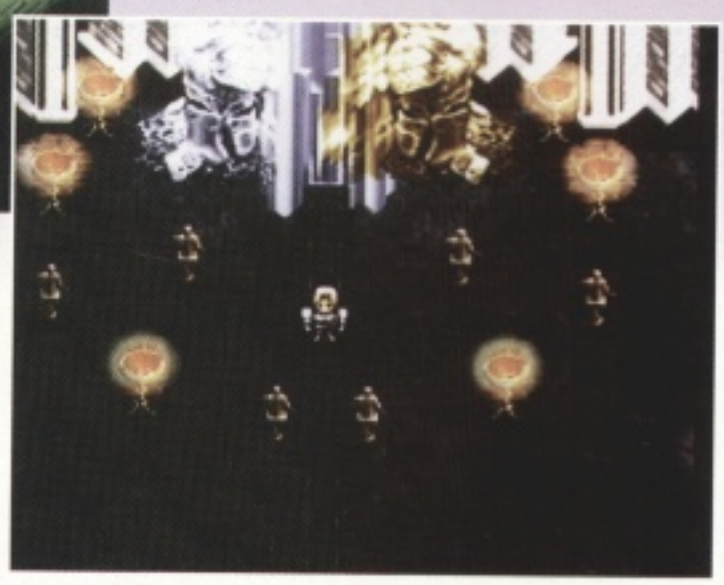




Top left: "What did you put in that fudge cake? I swear, the walls are... "

Bottom left: Battle animation is excellent, but you have to look at your own back.

Below: Don't look now, but I think you've just desecrated a holy place with your presence.



DIGITISED DWEOMER OF DEATH!

It seems the days of the artist designing a game sprite pixel by pixel with numbered colours on graph paper are well and truly over. With some resolution-doubling trickery and a potential 256 colour palette (itself chosen from a master palette of 32,768 shades), the Super Famicom is more than capable of presenting rendered, digitised or photo-realistic images.

And a trend is emerging. *Front Mission* made extensive use of digitised imagery for its gritty military settings, whilst *Final Fantasy III*'s backdrops were photo images given an electronic touch-up by Square's computer artists. Now Enix has picked up on the techniques of its main rival.

However, the predominant exploiter of digitisation in RPGs is undoubtedly the Sound Novel series, which we touched on back in SP22. SN games like Legend of kamatachi are essentially murder mysteries, played with multiple choice questions much in the style of a Fighting Fantasy gamebook. Complementing the thoughtful and text-led nature of your investigations is a digitised picture of every location, including rare – but effectively surprising – grisly scenes of gore-spattered walls and blood-stained murder weapons.

Character interaction in Maten inevitably calls up a full-screen graphic of whoever you're talking/shouting/snogging with.

Blimey. Tokyo looks a right mess.

Julian, the original model, poses for the paparazzi before embarking on a new career in bitter-sweet romantic comedies.

sequences. The end result is akin to the animation of *MKII*'s Goro or the dinosaurs of Atari's *Primal Rage*, although *Maten Densetsu*'s combat system remains firmly turn-based.

Unfortunately the game's other graphics are of an eye-avertingly low quality, reinforcing the suspicion that Takara hopes to sell this on the basis of a smart-looking gimmick rather than ensuring a consistently impressive presentation. This needn't reflect entirely on the gameplay, of course, and there are some additional touches that add to the depth of *Maten Densetsu*. For example, there's a three-dimensional element to hunting monsters so that it's possible to outmanoeuvre and attack your enemy from behind. Having defeated them, you can distribute the experience points across your abilities to choose which ones will improve quickest.

It's not certain that *Maten Densetsu* will make it to the West, although Takara does boast a considerable American presence through its SNES conversions of Neo Geo beat-'em-ups. Regardless, we expect to see many more examples of graphical cleverness in future RPGs as programming techniques that were once considered cutting edge become an established part of every game designer's repertoire.

***Mortal Kombat 3* is here. It's back and it's even more brutal than ever. What's more, it's heading for your SNES. And rumour has it that the version set to appear on the Ultra 64 will make the arcade version pale in comparison... Super Play packs a punch with the latest info on the Mortal Kombat phenomenon.**

MORTAL

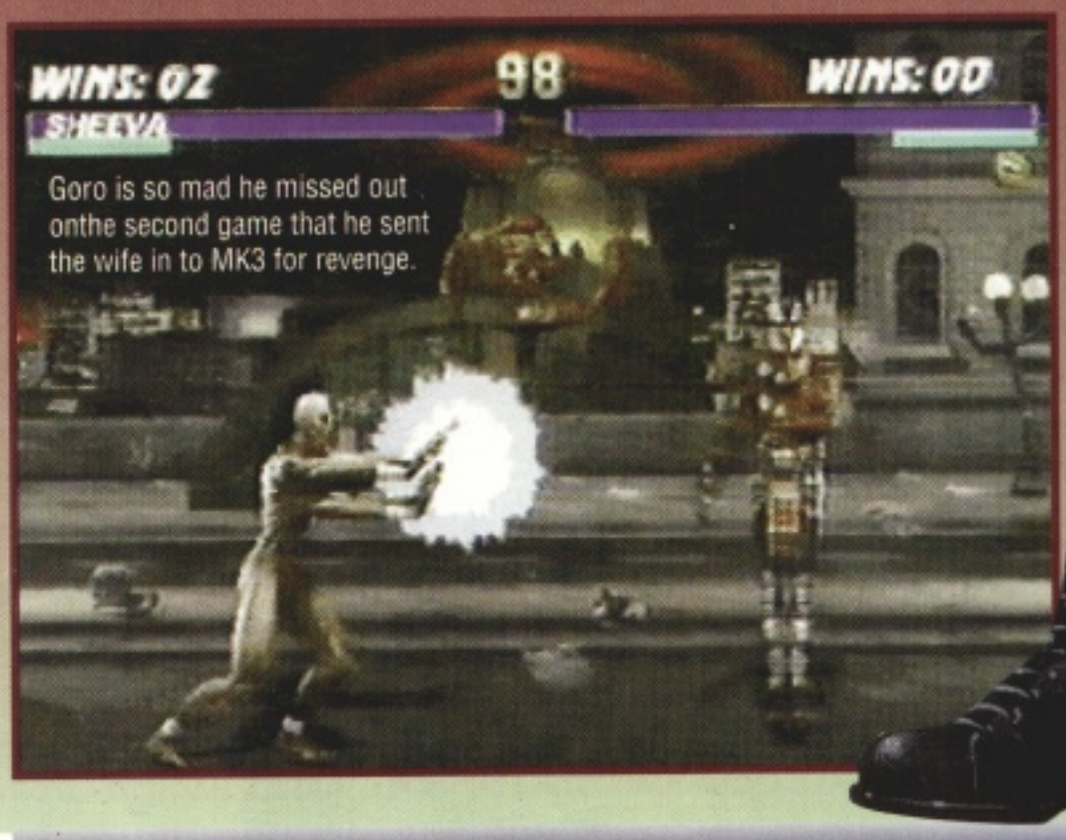
At last the follow-up to the most successful beat-'em-up in history has hit the arcades. Why would we bother telling you this? Well, we have news, hot from Williams Bally Midway in the States, that *Mortal Kombat 3* (or *MK3*, as it is now known) is going to hit the SNES and fabled Ultra 64 after all.

After all the doom and gloom that has been surrounding the 16Bit consoles this year, at last we have something to really look forward to. Indeed, as you will see in the quotes box, the producers of the Mortal Kombat series are bemused as to why many are already writing off the SNES. There's plenty life in the old dog yet.

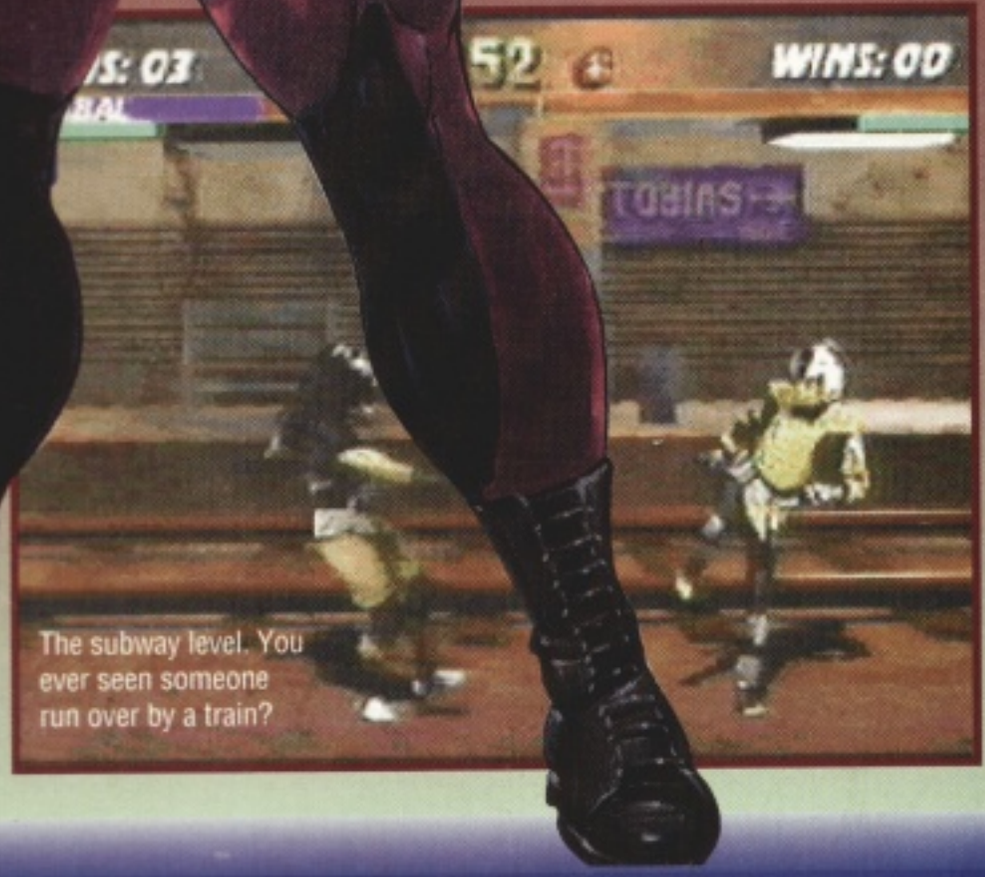
Mortal Kombat 3 has taken the arcades by storm, already outselling *Mortal Kombat 2* and, more importantly, *Killer Instinct*. In the three months or so that *Killer Instinct* has been out it has sold a respectable 6-7,000 machines. *Mortal Kombat 3* sold over 20,000 in its first three weeks!

The long-awaited follow-up features 14 characters, a mixture of stars from the first two games and a whole load of new guys and gals.

Jax returns with fists (and arms) of steel, and scary fireballs. Ahem.



Goro is so mad he missed out onthe second game that he sent the wife in to MK3 for revenge.

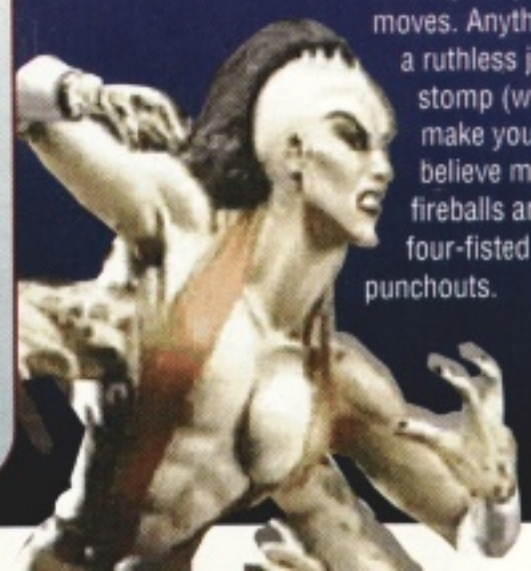


The subway level. You ever seen someone run over by a train?

MEET THE GANG

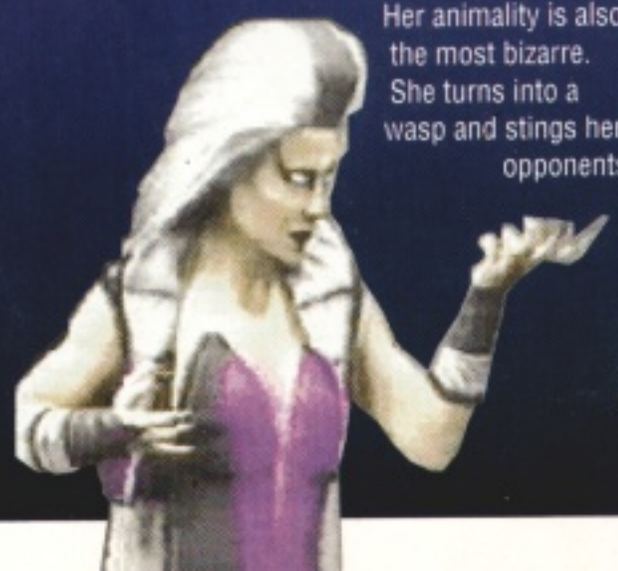
SHEEVA

The answer to the 'where's Goro?' brigade's dreams. Sheeva is one of the four-armed dude's many wives. She brings with her a pretty devastating range of moves. Anything from a ruthless jumping stomp (which will make you wince, believe me) to fireballs and full-on four-fisted punchouts.



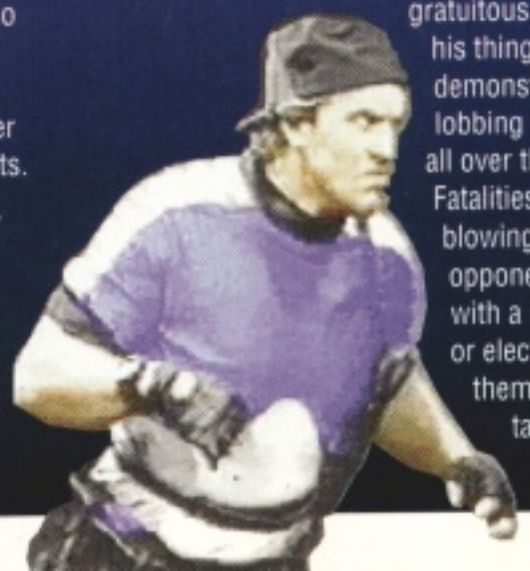
SINDAL

MK's first flying character. She can float around, firing odd fireballs at anyone who gets in her way. Her hair is also a weapon, she can whip it around and do serious damage. Her animality is also the most bizarre. She turns into a wasp and stings her opponents.



STRYKER

Stryker uses his baton to great effect. He can swoop towards his opponent and throw them with it or just throw the damn thing at them. As with all good American cops, gratuitous violence is his thing, which he demonstrates by lobbing grenades all over the place. Fatalities include blowing his opponent apart with a body bomb or electrocuting them with a taser gun.



MORTAL KOMBAT 3

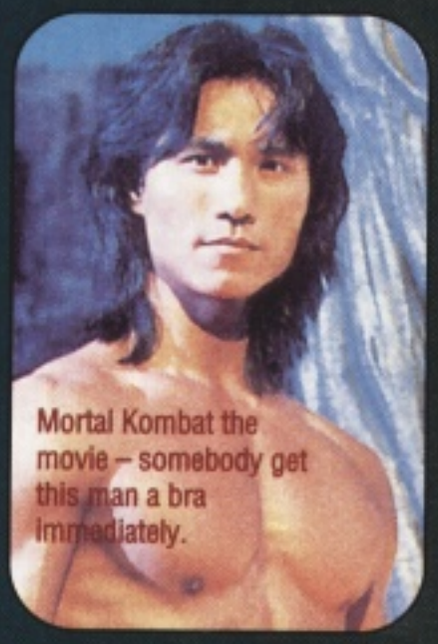
There are also heaps of new features which make MK3 stand out way ahead of the crowd. The first and most obvious are the much improved graphics. Williams have promised to pull out all the stops to make it as good as humanly possible on the SNES. Cart size is not a problem. If they have to, they are quite prepared to break all previous cart size records to produce the ultimate Kombat game. What this means to the cost is anybody's guess, but it is Williams' intent to keep that down as well.

Other new features include animalities, more hidden characters than ever before, a hidden selectable character, difficulty levels, Kombat Kodes and interactive backgrounds. The Kombat Kodes allow you to enter a special code via the buttons on the console to access hidden features. These can be anything from a new character to fighting in the dark or even upside down. Interactive backgrounds include you uppercutting opponents through the roof.

Another new feature is the run button. Press it and you'll go howling towards your opponent. This means extra special moves and combos for every character. *Mortal Kombat 3* also allows combos, showing how many hits and how much energy they remove.

Work is going on now on the SNES version which will do to *Mortal Kombat 2* what *Mortal Kombat 2* did to *Mortal Kombat*, and then some. Williams are also members of Nintendo's Dream Team, that elusive group of developers who are working on Ultra 64 titles. The team are so adamant they will have the best game that they are aiming to make the Ultra version even better than the arcade game. The SNES version (which will include all the features from the arcade game) is due to be released in April '96, the price isn't confirmed yet, but don't expect a *Streetfighter* style £70 rip-off. The Ultra version will hit as soon as the machine is launched.

MORTAL MOVIE MANIA



Mortal Kombat the movie – somebody get this man a bra immediately.

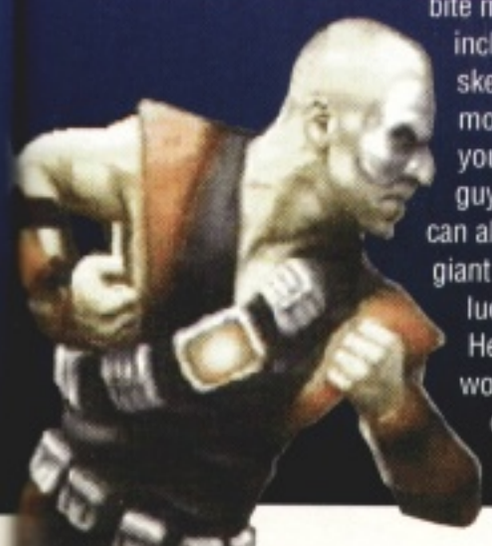
Everyone knows that the Mortal Kombat movie is on the way and from the scenes we have seen it kicks the butt of the Streetfighter movie. Did you know though that a new Manga style animated series is also on the way and should be available over here sometime during the next few months? It will feature all the characters from the game and also some codes that will bring out new features of all versions of the game.

The flying crotch of death. – Kung Lao demonstrates his new moves.

The new Kano takes a fireball from Liu Kang.

KANO

The character Kano is a real blast from the past. So far, his only fighting appearance was in the original *Mortal Kombat* game. His moves remain basically the same as before, except for the the addition of a pretty sick grab and bite move. Kano's fatalities include ripping your skeleton out through your mouth and laser blasting your body apart. Nice guy. Animality-wise, he can also turn into a giant spider to eat his luckless opponent. He's obviously been working hard on that one since the original *MK*.



NIGHTWOLF

Nightwolf has the distinction of having three fatalities. One move features his trusty hatchet which he uses in a painful uppercut move. His other moves involve bows and arrows plus a shield which repels projectiles, directing them back to his opponent. Predictably he turns into a wolf for his animality move.

SEKTOR

A red robot ninja who is out to get Sub Zero, Sektor has homing missiles which chase his opponent. While you're trying to avoid them he'll be kicking you in, of course. He also has Ed Boon's favourite fatality. Clamps come out of his chest and crush his opponent. Nice.

SONJA

Penthouse model Kerri Hoskins brings Sonja to life in style. Her old moves are retained along with a killer bicycle kick. She turns into a bird for her animality.

MAKERS SPEAK

MK3 programmer Ed Boon comments on why reports of the death of the SNES have been greatly exaggerated...

Which is going to be the lucky home format to see *Mortal Kombat 3* first?

Mortal Kombat 3 will be coming out on the Sony PlayStation first. They have the first rights for 32Bit and higher. There are plans for other versions. We've been talking to Atari for the Jaguar, we've talked about 3D0, we've been talking to Sega about the Saturn, and Nintendo about Ultra 64. There are a lot of versions of this game on the way. And of course, let's not forget the Super Nintendo and Genesis versions.

Not abandoning the 16Bits yet, then?

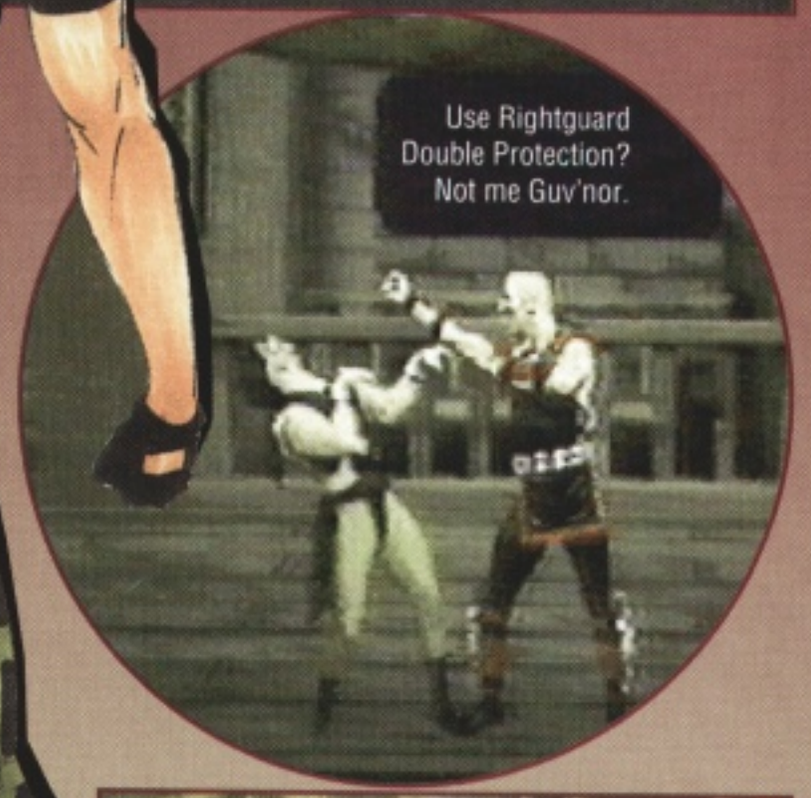
We know that the SNES and Mega Drive don't have many years left in them, but we don't think they're gonna die as fast as everyone is predicting. You have to establish that, when you have something as expensive as the Sony PlayStation and others, that goes beyond the magic line where you sell millions straightaway. You have to wait for the price to come down before the better games come out. I don't think we're going to have millions of games out for those systems for over a year. In the meantime, if there's a hot title like *Mortal Kombat*, *NBA Jam*, *Killer Instinct*, whatever, I think that stuff will be driving sales – just look at *Donkey Kong Country*. They sold several million *DKC*s and that's "just" a 16Bit game.

Williams' *Mortal Kombat 3* creators John Tobias (left) and Ed Boon (right).

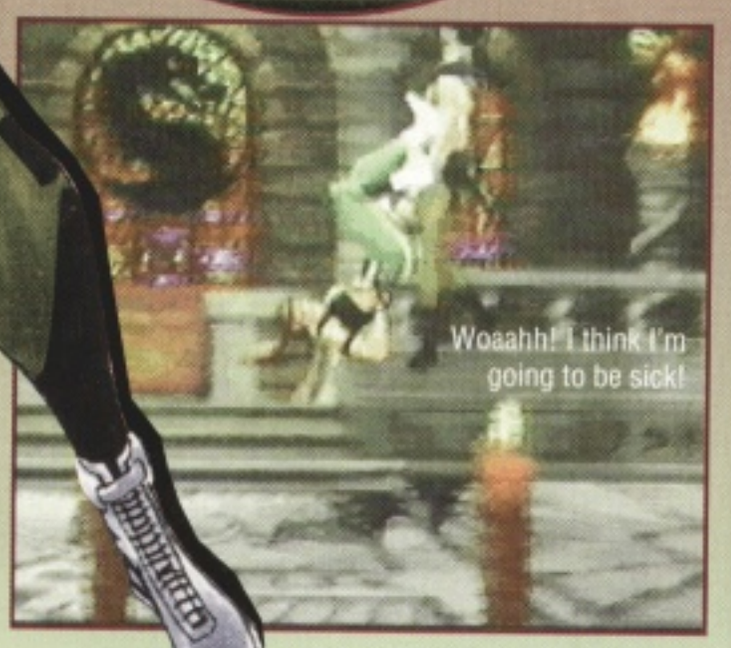
We will be continuing to support the 16Bits until we feel that it's not a profitable thing to do. I know we'll be supporting them with *MK3*. If there's a *Mortal Kombat 4* and if there's still a strong 16Bit market, then we'll do it.

So, there you have it, you haven't even played *Mortal Kombat 3* yet on your SNES and already there's talk of a conversation of the Big 4.

Kano kindly knifes Stryker in the face.



Use Rightguard Double Protection? Not me Guv'nor.



Woaahh! I think I'm going to be sick!

Sonja – a keen follower of the Janet Jackson stomach workout.

ISSUE 33

KUNG LAO

Old be-hatted Kunggers (pictured below) returns along with most of his original moves intact. His hat toss, teleport, dive kick and energy spin are all retained, but no-one has seen his fatalities yet.

LIU KANG

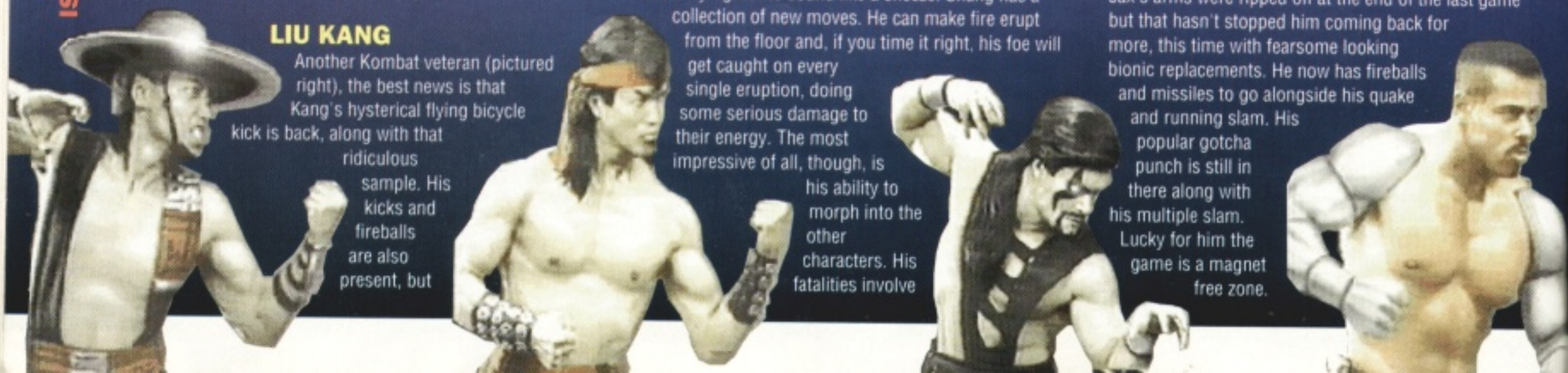
Another Kombat veteran (pictured right), the best news is that Kang's hysterical flying bicycle kick is back, along with that ridiculous sample. His kicks and fireballs are also present, but he has a new and rather bizarre fatality. He disappears and his foe just blows up. Cool.

SHANG TSUNG

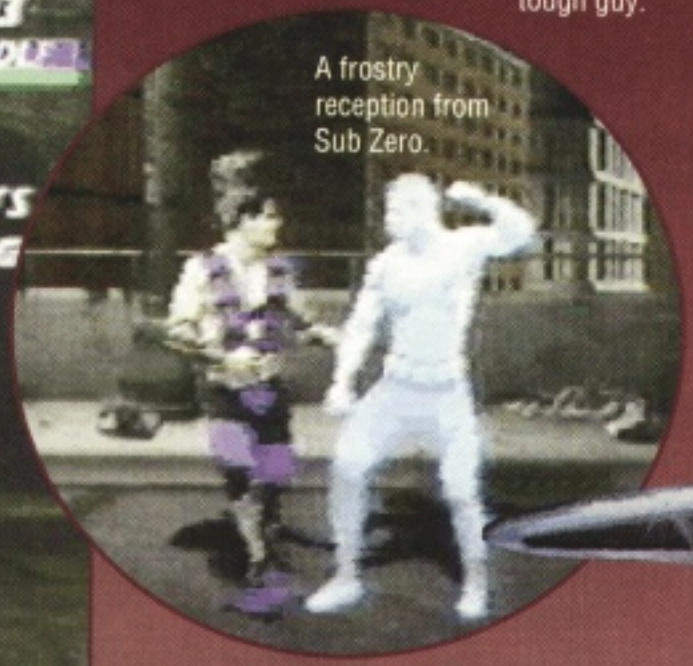
The only fighter to sound like a sneeze. Shang has a collection of new moves. He can make fire erupt from the floor and, if you time it right, his foe will get caught on every single eruption, doing some serious damage to their energy. The most impressive of all, though, is his ability to morph into the other characters. His fatalities involve using spikes and sucking people apart from their limbs. I'll leave it to your imagination.

JAX

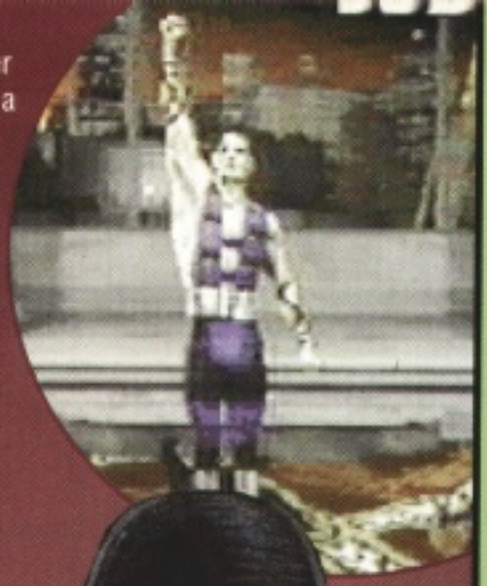
Jax's arms were ripped off at the end of the last game but that hasn't stopped him coming back for more, this time with fearsome looking bionic replacements. He now has fireballs and missiles to go alongside his quake and running slam. His popular gotcha punch is still in there along with his multiple slam. Lucky for him the game is a magnet free zone.



Nightwolf has one of the more impressive animalities in the game. A quick combo from you will see him transofrm into a wolf and maul his opponent to a rather gruesome death.



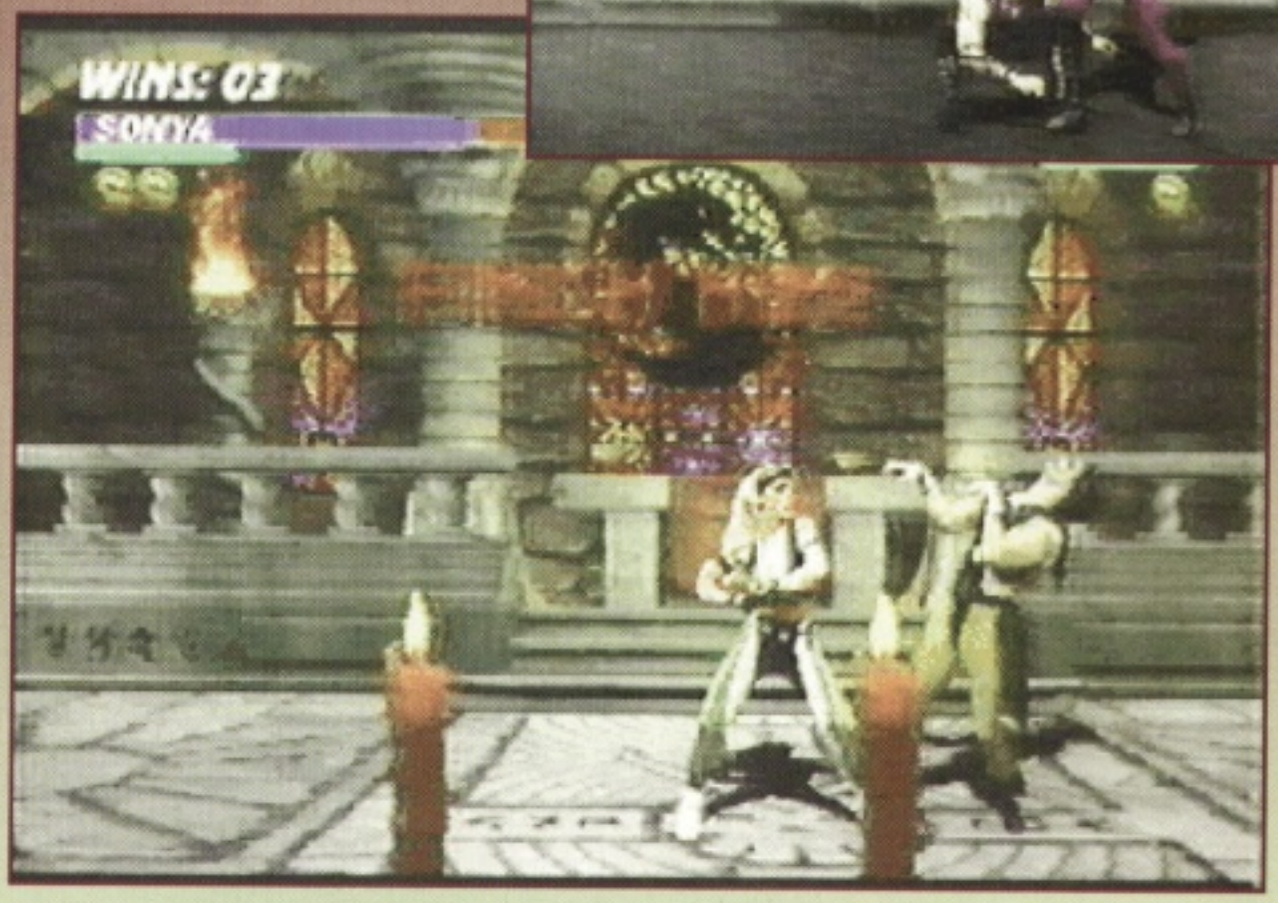
A frostry reception from Sub Zero.



Sub – no longer a ninja but still a tough guy.

'Ere mate, have you seen this hole in your poncy lycra tights?

Looks like Shang Tsung is taking Sonya's refusal of a dinner for two a bit hard. Bless him.



Kung Lao returns in *Mortal Kombat 3*, complete with that killer bit of hat tossing.

SUB ZERO

Old Sub is no longer a ninja, so for the first time in a *Mortal Kombat* game we see his face. He also brings some new moves. The best is the ice clone. Pull it off and a blue Sub Zero appears on the screen for a short time. If a foe touches it, he or she is frozen. He can also bring down showers of ice on top of people and slide about all over the place. Any bets on his animality? He turns into a, wait for it, polar bear. Still, it could have been a penguin. Or worse.

CYRAX

Originally to be called Mustard, Cyrax can throw a green net at his opponent, dragging them in so he can uppercut them. He can also teleport and roll bombs all over the place, with the inevitable result for anyone who stands on them. He also has a nasty self-destruct fatality that has to be seen to be believed.

KABAL

Kabal carries a life-support system on his back and looks uncannily like a Predator. His tornado spin leaves opponents stunned, and his gear slice is more than just a cutting remark. Watch out for the fireballs too...

CART

- WHERE EXACTLY DOES

Being a video game fanatic is an expensive business these days. Most new releases sport a shiny price tag of around £50. But why do they cost so much? And can anything be done? Super Play donned its detective coat and rooted out some facts and figures that you may find surprising...

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission recently concluded a year long investigation into the video games market and announced that carts are too expensive. You would hope that no-one was paid too highly for the revelation.

Of course, games are too expensive, we all know that. What we don't know is why we're being forced to pay £50 and sometimes more for a new release... We would also like to know if there's any prospect of this pretty dismal situation improving. The MMC failed to get to grips with either question.

Okay, if you shop around you can get cheaper games, but these don't necessarily represent value for money. Games are being discounted down to £20, sometimes £10, because they can't be shifted at full price and they need to be got rid of cheaply. The reason they can't get rid of them, of course, is because they're crap. And if they're

LICENCE TO RAKE IT IN?

Obviously retailers, publishers, developers and Nintendo themselves have constant overheads associated with running a business: wages, utility, bills, etc, but within the publisher's margin there can also be some more direct costs.

Publishing a SNES cart is an expensive business made even more hazardous by the fact that software houses have to pay Nintendo cash up front.

This means that they have to pay out hundreds of thousands of pounds before their carts are even manufactured, let alone sold.

A few years ago, when the console market was at its height and even average SNES carts were selling well, this wasn't much of a problem. Publishers could fork out the cash with some confidence that they would recoup the costs (and then some) from retail.

Now, however, with the console market on the wane, there are no guarantees. That's why publishers are only looking to release "safe" titles.

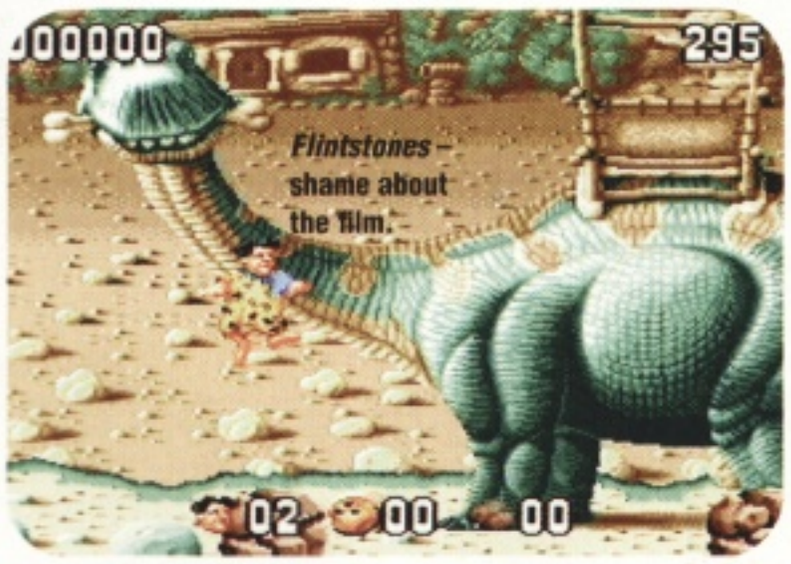
One way of hedging bets is to go for a licence. Something like *Jurassic Park* or, this year's *Judge Dredd* for instance, has built-in mass market appeal, plus the game gets caught up in the whirlwind of hype that accompanies such films.

The same is true of games that are backed up by big name sports stars such as Shaq O'Neal and, to a lesser extent, successful coin-ops like *Mortal Kombat*.

These endorsements do not come cheap. Industry rumour says that the *Jurassic Park* licence eventually went for £2.5 million. Certainly £1+ million licences are not uncommon.

This cost can be spread across many different formats and, usually, has appeal around the world rather than in one isolated territory. Nevertheless it is a significant factor in the pricing of carts.

Then again, paying for big licences can compound a publisher's problem, either because the licence itself fails to take off (*The Flintstones*) or the game is so poor that it simply can't be saved, even with a hot licence (like *Akira* on the Amiga).



Flintstones – shame about the film.

Jurassic Park – shame about the game.

BREAKDOWN OF COST OF YOUR AVERAGE GAME

This example cart costing around £50 has a high profile licence attached, is supported by a big budget marketing campaign and was produced by a third party development team.

VAT = £7.74 (14.8%)
Retailer's margin = £14.90 (29.8%)
Publisher's margin = £7.48 (15%)
Licence = £1.20 (2.4%)
Marketing = £1.95 (4%)
Developer's royalty = £2.28 (4.6%)
Nintendo's charge = £16.53 (33.1%)
Freight = £0.50 (1%)
Duty = £0.87 (1.7%)

*Note: Nintendo do give price breaks on higher orders. Their price list is as follows:

Less than 50,000 units = £16.53
50,000+ = £15.86
100,000+ = £15.20
200,000+ = £14.53
300,000+ = £14.20
400,000+ = £13.86

The price includes manufacturing, duplication and all packaging.

COSTS

YOUR MONEY GO?

crap at £50, they're still crap at £20. Where's the bargain? Besides, the outbreak of relatively low-price games in the High Street doesn't mean the emergence of anything like as useful as a genuine budget market.

Publishers don't make money at these prices (they actually lose money, in some cases) and so, once stocks are cleared, they'll either drop out of the SNES market, or, if they're feeling brave, give it another go with a game that they believe they can sell at full price.

What they cannot do is decide, "Okay, perhaps £50 is a bit expensive, let's produce a quality cart for £20." The reason they can't is because the only people that can manufacture SNES carts are Nintendo themselves – and they charge an awful lot of money to do so. (See the above chart.) Even the MMC picked up on that one!

Even if a publisher were to choose to make no money, and retailers were to halve their profit margins, games would still cost over £35, simply because Nintendo charge so much (£16+) to get the ball rolling.

Nintendo keep the actual cost of manufacturing secret, but industry guesses average out at about £3. Which would make Nintendo's mark-up 500%.

The only people who can alleviate the situation, therefore, are Nintendo. And they show no signs of budging.

Instead, more and more publishers are being forced out of the marketplace leaving more and more software sales to Nintendo themselves.

Nintendo, remember, don't have to charge themselves £16+ for manufacturing (probably around £3, remember), either in

their own margins or in their retail prices. There are £13 worth of room for manoeuvre right there.

Donkey Kong Country was, no questions, an exceptional game and well worth its full price. But no other publisher in the world could have made *DKC* work. This doesn't mean no other publisher is up to Nintendo's speed on SNES development, but that if a third party publisher were to ask Nintendo to manufacture a game that big, it would be charged such a high fee that it probably couldn't sell the game for less than £100 – and at that price the value for money of any game, even the best, comes into question.

And what does this mean for future SNES software support? Well, in the short term there will still be a great deal of cheapies around, as publishers carry on trying to clear their meg mountains, and, while the majority will be stinkers, every now and then you might come across a genuine bargain.

Beyond that, third party publishers will either abandon the SNES as too risky or be highly selective, releasing only what they consider to be sure-fire certs, such as the *MK2*s and *FIFA 95*s of this world. The end result being that you'll probably be faced with a limited range of 'must-have' games at around £50.

The only alternatives lie with Nintendo. First, they could quite conceivably lower their manufacturing charge. If, for example, they decided to charge just £5, games could start appearing at closer to £30, sales would go up and everyone, including Nintendo, would still make money.

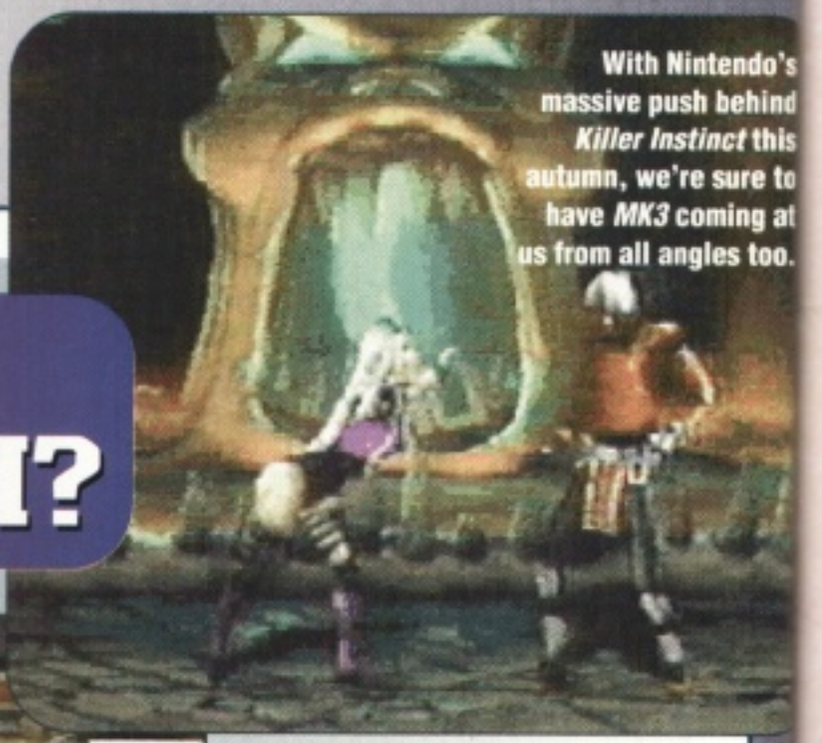
Alternatively, if Nintendo still want to charge third parties the current 'cost of goods', they could just lower the prices of their own new releases (they already have to a certain extent, but there's still a lot of room for improvement).

Nintendo currently pitch their product at around the same price as that of third party software, sometimes slightly lower. But third parties have no choice, they have to charge high prices because that's what Nintendo charges them.

Nintendo's pricing comes across as relatively fair in comparison to other firms' carts. But then, the prices of those other carts are grossly unfair in the first place thanks to Nintendo's own manufacturing pricing policy.

It certainly isn't fair for Nintendo to come across as the good guys because their products are a fiver or so cheaper than other publishers'. Third parties charge huge amounts and make very little; Nintendo charge slightly less and makes a fortune.

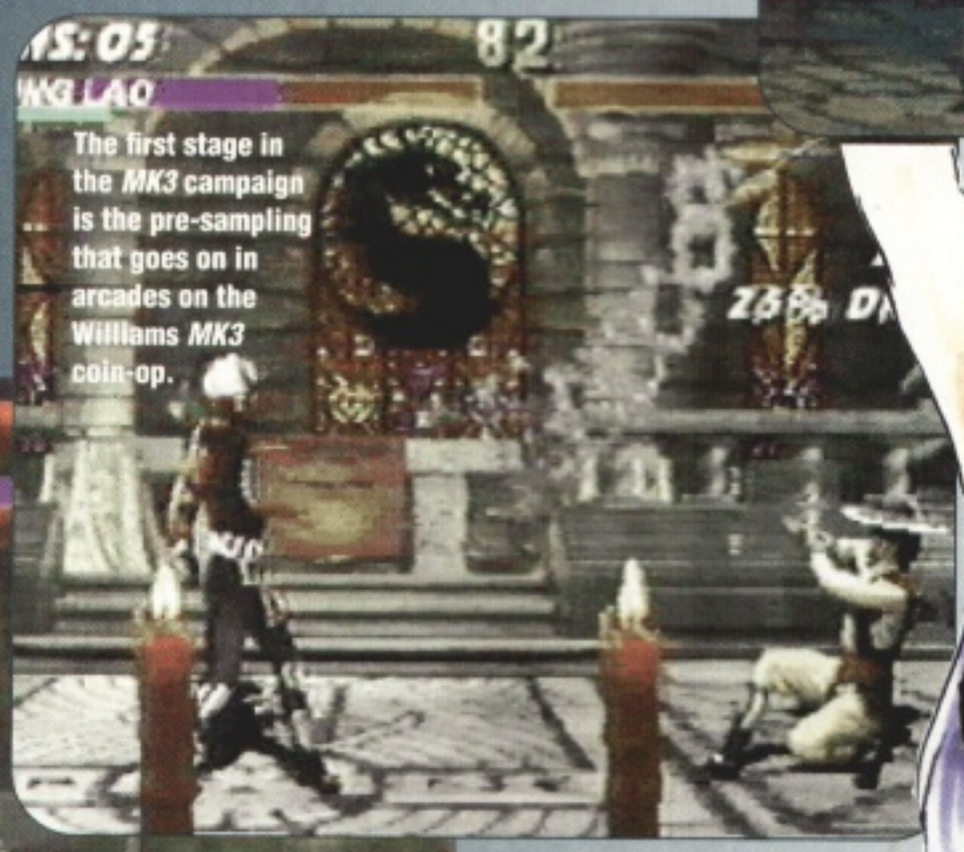
If Nintendo did decide to independently lower their retail prices without lowering the 'cost of goods' charged to third parties, no publisher would be able to compete and the SNES software market really would become a one-horse race (as it is, Nintendo expect to take a staggering 60+ per cent of this year's sales).



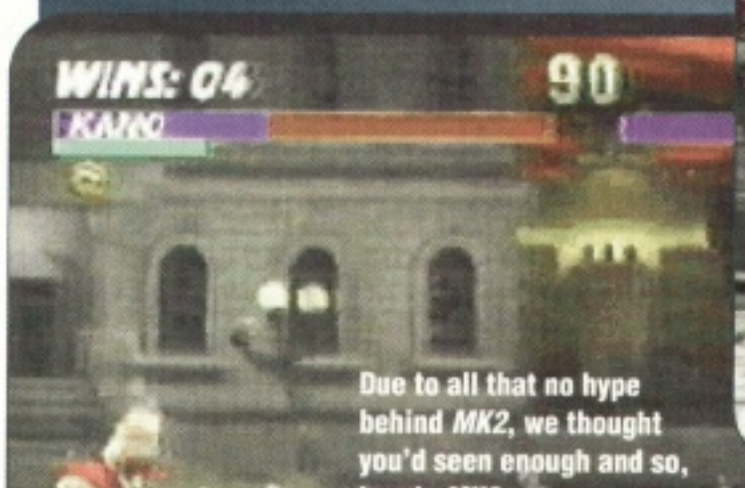
With Nintendo's massive push behind *Killer Instinct* this autumn, we're sure to have *MK3* coming at us from all angles too.

HMM... NO HYPE REQUIRED THEN, EH?

The tag line for *Mortal Kombat 2* – no hype required. In reality, Acclaim spent over £7 million worldwide on marketing *MK2*. This is an unusually high figure, admittedly, but UK marketing budgets of £500,000 for the very biggest titles are common and do have to be considered when you're working out just how games get to be so expensive.



The first stage in the *MK3* campaign is the pre-sampling that goes on in arcades on the Williams *MK3* coin-op.



Due to all that no hype behind *MK2*, we thought you'd seen enough and so, here's *MK3*...

With Nintendo spending $20 million on letting you know about *Killer Instinct*, we wonder how much *Mortal Kombat 3* will have spent on it.

Half-naked females – they're all part of the subtle marketing seduction.

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E3 SHOW

STOP PRESS

The biggest SNES games of the year were on show for the first time at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles last month. And Super Play's ed was there to bring you the news... Great news for SNES players everywhere...

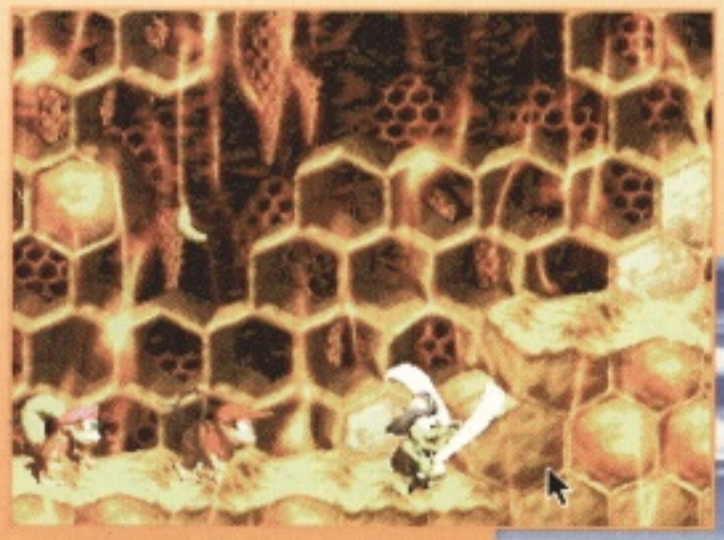
You wouldn't get far without one of these snazzy badges at E3.

LA – the town that boasts billboards proclaiming OJ's innocence or guilt depending on what neighbourhood you're in, the town that never sleeps, and, from May 11th to 13th, host to America's second largest trade show ever, the Electronic Entertainment Expo. The show was as ritzy and glitzy as only the Americans know how. And for those in search of the latest news in SNES-land it was a treat.

On show were THE BIG SNES RELEASES of this year. Let's just roll off a few of those to give you a taste of what's to come: *Killer Instinct*, *Donkey Kong Country 2: Diddy's Kong Quest*, *Mortal Kombat 3*, *Earthworm Jim 2* and *Doom*. That's five absolutely enormous games before we even start on summing up the best of the rest.

The Nintendo stand, originally entitled World of Nintendo, took up over 40,000 square feet and hogged the best part of one of the main halls at the show. The Virtual Boy had its own section of the Nintendo stand devoted to it with five games to try out. More on this on page 16. Although many have mocked the very idea of the Virtual Boy, and although it is limited by its redness, I was quite taken by the novelty of it. The 3D effects are far better than I imagined they would be and you really do feel as if you are surrounded by the game the minute you don that daft visor.

There was a wave of concern and disappointment over the fact that Nintendo's Ultra 64 was still under wraps. Booooo! The reason, well, listen to what Howard Lincoln, Chairman of Nintendo of America, had to say: "Over the past two years, SGI's graphics technology has enabled Nintendo to raise the entertainment bar on 16-bit gameplay. Our new *Killer Instinct* and *Donkey Kong Country 2*



Diddy Kong Quest (or *Donkey Kong Country 2*) is one of the games that Nintendo is pinning its hopes on this Christmas...

We're sure that Nintendo won't have to go so far as to even cross their fingers, as a follow-up to the biggest seller ever is a sure-fire hit!

KILLER INSTINCT

The other biggie at the show. It's the beat-'em-up of the coin-op that you've all been waiting for. Everyone thought they'd have to wait to see this on the U64, but there it was at E3 for all to see...

Mock-ups of the box artwork. It could change, so don't blame us if the cart comes in a different package when you buy yours.

This here is Orchid from *Killer Instinct*. She is in fact a secret agent who has been despatched to investigate some mysterious disappearances surrounding the *Killer Instinct* tournament.

Dixie can use her ponytail to flick Diddy high into the sky when the need arises. Chun Li eat your heart out.

games, both for the Super NES, which are debuting here at E3 and which will reach game players this summer and fall, simply raise that quality bar even higher... beyond *Donkey Kong Country* and certainly to a level equal to any of the 32-bit software being exhibited here at E3. What this means is that the quality of video games now under development for Nintendo Ultra 64 simply must be that much better. Not just a little bit, but a lot! And Nintendo is going to take the additional time necessary to achieve that level of quality. There's no question about it." Hence the delay. So, hurrah after all.

At a press conference our Howie spoke at length about the scourge of the software industry – the pirates. In Thailand alone the percentage of counterfeit software exceeds 90%. And he claimed that "Worldwide losses to Nintendo and its third party publishers last year alone from all pirated activity came to approximately $2.5 billion." Piracy on such a scale is seriously damaging the software industry. So, please don't participate in it, eh?

Elsewhere in the Super Express pages of this mag you'll find more details on the hottest games on display at the show, but we had to squeeze in these three extra pages to make sure we crammed in all the pictures that we had. We wouldn't want you to think that you were missing out on anything!

GET YOUR KILLER INSTINCT TATTOOS HERE

In a small and seedy booth hidden away in the corner of the World of Nintendo you could have your own *Killer Instinct* tattoos. While I was there, I witnessed some idiot getting his arms covered in PERMANENT *Killer Instinct* tattoos. This was all very distressing, so I quickly hurried on to a small stand next to this where you could get your own fake tattoo. Permanent enough for me. Three bloody days of scrubbing it took me to get rid of the Riptor on my arm.

It'll take more than soap and water to get one of these off your arm.

The highly acclaimed *Earthworm Jim* now has a sequel well underway.

Hot on the heels of *Streetfighter the movie*, *Mortal Kombat the movie* is in production and this is the poster for that film. You saw it here first!

Elements of the American Dream feature heavily in *Earthbound*.

STARS IN YOUR EYES

If you kept your eyes peeled there was a wealth of familiar faces to be spotted in the crowds at the show. Klingons were everywhere. TJ Hooker, sorry William Shatner, made a brief appearance and even that bloke Bobbit (the one who had his you-know-what sliced off by his wife) was promoting some adult software and allegedly showing off his scar to anyone who asked!

Elsewhere, at the many parties software houses were throwing for the benefit of the industry, various stars had been paid to attend. You know what these stars are like – they won't get out of bed for less than a grand. Seal did a gig at the Nintendo bash, Mark Hamill (alias Luke Skywalker) and Biff from *Back to the Future* (no-one around here knows his real name) hosted the Electronic Arts do, while Michael Jackson even turned up at one event to play some games. So, and you heard it here in *Super Play* first, the man is actually real and not just a robotic pile of plastic surgery.

Aliens exist. It's true, coz I bumped into one or two.

So, there you have it, even the stars couldn't keep away from the Electronic Entertainment Expo.

Spinal – aptly named, we feel.

Nintendo's new hardware... on the left, the Ultra 64 is still being kept underwraps and *wasn't* on show at E3. Note the absence of the control pad. Nintendo are being very coy about this. On the right, the Virtual Boy which *was* on show and will be available before Christmas in the States at least.

NEXT MONTH

Next month we'll be bringing you more in-depth information on the highlights of the show. Watch out for more exclusive pics of *Doom*, *Killer Instinct* and *Mortal Kombat 3*. We'll also be bringing you news of ALL the latest games on their way to your SNES over the next few months.

There's loads more we haven't even touched on here. No space and no time cos this mag is on its way to press... You'll have to wait.

BEST OF THE REST

More power to the worm in *Earthworm Jim 2*.

EARTHWORM JIM 2

Shiny ▪
October 1995

Everyone's revamping their game design tools this month, it seems. Dave Perry and his Shiny colleagues are no exception, as they've used an improved technique called Animotion II to lend a smoother quality and feel to the game's sprite animation.

EARTHBOUND

Nintendo of America ▪ 24 meg
June 1995

We're still a little puzzled by Nintendo of America's intention to bring this game to the States. Not because we're not looking forward to it, but because it seems so at odds with the rest of their purportedly ground-breaking line-up. The explanation may lay in the game's subject matter: although it originated in Japan, *Earthbound* is all about America.

Earthbound – a bizarre mix of American culture and caricatures.

It's the brainchild of Shigesato Itoi, a famous Japanese writer and TV presenter who grew up dreaming about a Middle America which he had only ever experienced through the old fifties and sixties sit-coms he used to watch on the TV.

When he came to create an RPG for the Super Famicom, he drew together those icons and caricatures for an instantly familiar world of bubblegum, baseball and white picket fences.

A weirdly comic science fiction plot provides the player's motivation, and the game plays like a turn-based RPG with alien invaders providing the conflict.

Originally called *Mother 2* in Japan, *Earthbound* is the sequel to an NES title which almost made it to the west itself (the translation was completed but NoA never released it). Its naïve cartoon strip graphics demonstrate that 8-bit heritage all too clearly, and there's a danger that it will be judged unfairly because of its lack of visual sophistication. But the storyline has captivated many Japanese gamers, and we hope it will do the same for Americans on its June 1995 release. Whether it makes it over the waves to Blighty is still uncertain.

CHRONO TRIGGER

Squaresoft ▪ 32 meg
September 1995

An American version of last month's cover game is under way, with Ted Woolsey taking on a little help with translation work to get the game ready on time. An RPG with character design by Akira Toriyama, *Chrono Trigger* is one of the most attractive and engaging RPGs ever to appear on the SNES. See *SP32* for our comprehensive feature on this excellent title.

Rumours abounded that *Final Fantasy VII* was in production for the SNES, with *FFVIII* due to appear on the NU64 next year. Unfortunately there was still no news of an American release for *Final Fantasy Extreme* (*FFV* in Japan), despite the hopes of many fans. It's looking as if old Ted will never get round to finishing the translation, though perhaps a concerted letter or email campaign by our American readers could change his mind.

Chrono Trigger – an English version on the way.

BREATH OF FIRE II

Capcom ▪ 16 meg
Autumn 1995

The strategy-makers at Capcom USA must have been kicking themselves as they watched Square translate and sell – quite profitably, thanks very much – an RPG developed by Capcom of Japan. Not to make the same mistake again, they've kept *BOFII* very much to themselves and intend to release it in this autumn.

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TIN STAR

Spanning the controller throng like some crazy cowboy colossus comes Tin Star, a pistol-packing washing machine on legs.

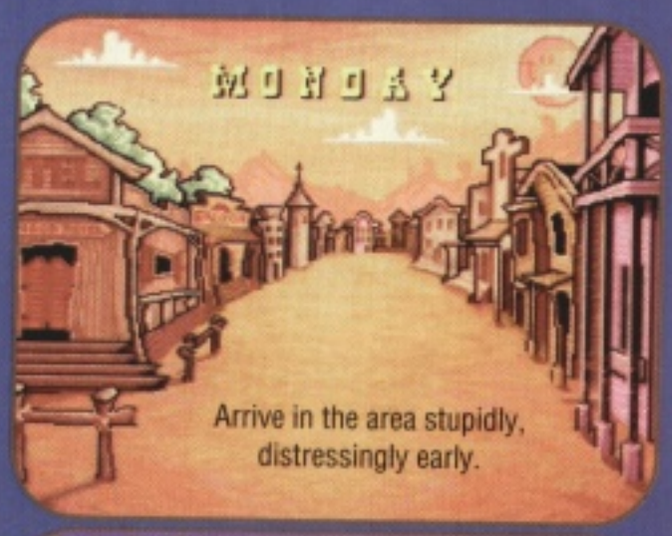
US Release

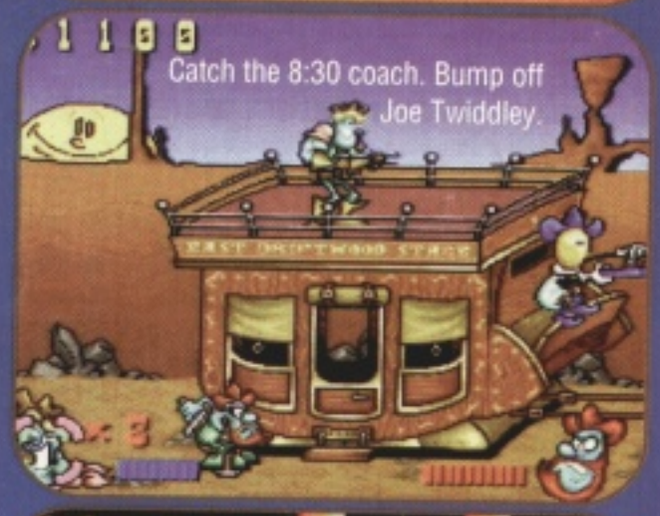
Game: Tin Star
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: In-house
Price: £50 approx
Release: On import
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbits

"No, seriously, I worked out to get like this."

MONDAY

The days simply fly by in sleepy ol' East Driftwood. Yup, there's so little to do and so much time, or something. Take Monday for instance...





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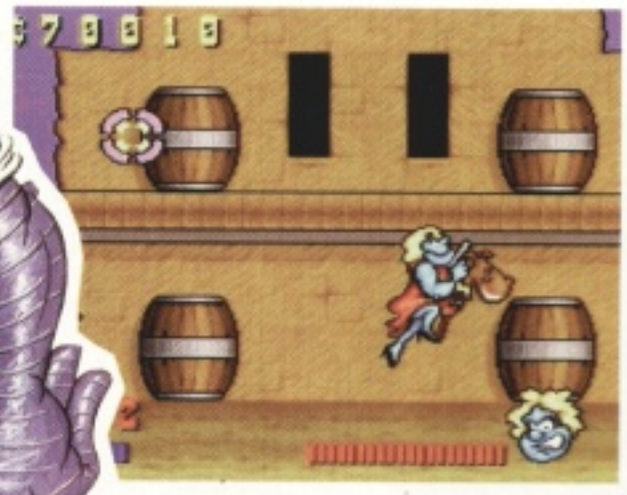


Transvestisism – alive and frilly in the desert.

Annoying bouncy buggers.

SPECIAL THINGS

The crosshair gyrating action isn't just restricted to the rudimentary levels. Blimey no. Prior to the combat each day, there's the opportunity to 'knock-em down' and rake in some mula in the process. The longer the bottles stay airborne, the fatter your wad becomes. And if you're exceptionally accurate during the levels, the chance for big bucks lie within your accurate barrel if you enter the start shooting zone, with Mode 7 trickery to boot.

Position the cursor and try to hit the target.

This one is fairly self-explanatory too.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Nintendo are certainly breaking new peripheral ground with their latest shoot-'em-up *Tin Star*, it being the first cart compatible with the SNES Super Scope, mouse *and* pad. What a pity then, that they haven't quite got the soul-searing gameplay in there to back it up.

At first glance, *Tin Star* seems a brightly-coloured marriage of platform, into-the-screen and side-on scrolling lead-peppering action. And as the name suggests, there's a bit of a Western theme in there too, allowing plenty of opportunity for peppering a few moustachioed banditos full of steaming slugs, you'd think. And to an extent, that's true.

You fill the spur-heeled boots of the *Tin Star* of the title, a steel-jawed robot-cum-sheriff who roams around the West on his (t)rusty mount Aluminium, dishing out his own squeaky clean brand of justice to passing metallic villains. It's your job to get this de-fleshed Yul Brinner through a week in East Driftwood, cleansing it of the stain of Black Bart and his Bad Oil Gang. The days are mapped out in the manual, with hints on how to clear them. This, combined with the cartoon-flavoured visuals, certainly hints at it being for the younger gameplayer, but hey, we're not ageist.

Each day, Monday through to Sunday, has been split into three (or so) story-advancing sections which vary in their gaming style. Some parts involve walking/running through a scrolling landscape, blasting bandits and having a pop at ravenous vultures. Others involve the muscular chap bouncing around a building or train, and there are several first-person perspective sections set in the saloon and desert. There's no real control of the sprite's movement in the 2D sections though – you take charge of a roving gun sight (necessary when you consider the 'Scope's compatibility). Bosses invariably appear at the end of each platform stage, and there's a showdown sequence each evening (whatever happened to good old High Noon, eh?).

And... you should keep your mirth corsets fastened, because the game is littered with some "side-splitting dialogue" and humour. For example, there's a villain called Tiny, and – you'll never guess – Tiny's huge! Nice one. And other such hilarities.

But there are a few irritations that spoil an idea with promising life. The main fault lies in the lack of challenge within its seven-day space. Emphasis is placed on trying to see the different endings, but this merely means you either marry the Mayor's daughter or, well, you don't – it depends on your bank balance (the dollar-sapping bint). Annoyingly, the enemies point their shooters at you from the same location each time you play. It forces the gameplay to become oh so predictable, so you're not going to get any truly sweaty moments if you return to it (unlike a *Lethal Enforcers* style blast orgy). The only really intense moments are during the showdown scenes, with you firing at a randomly-placed gun barrel, then playing your sights on the enemy.

The edge-of-seat action becomes stretched as thinly as Bobby Charlton's airy locks during the platform sections. You don't have control over the character's movement (not essentially a problem), but the gun sights switch off and on as he moves etc. This means that any adrenaline sloshing around your system becomes intermittently diluted. With a shoot-'em-up (and especially one that's 'Scope-friendly), surely you just want to pull that damn trigger? It's a shame this hasn't more longevity, but although it's slightly more difficult with a pad, you'll have whipped through the week within a day.

● Marcus Hawkins

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70%	73%	55%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	61%
43%		

VERDICT: A good idea spoiled by a lack of levels to get your teeth into, and a rather linear vein to the ones that are in there already.

On the left, a pretty stunning arrangement of blue blobs.

There in the bottom left corner is the big green git with a weight problem.

This is the training section of the game, where you can get in a bit of practice.

Super Puyo Puyo **finally gets a Western release, but it's been changed completely. It's totally unrecognisable. Anyway, enough about the packaging...**

KIRBY'S AVA

HOW DIFFERENT?

Hmmm... much as I'm a big fan of the original game it would have been nice to see a bit more effort on the old revamp front. Here, in full, are the changes that were made to make *Super Puyo Puyo* turn *Kirby*.

or

Here's the intro. Well it's got Kirby instead of Arale, of course, but he still gets slapped on the head by a Puyo and there's still that intricate stonework in the background.

or

The characters. Which do you fancy – Kirby's cute and cuddly squid or Puyo's totally bizarre collection of angry fish, blubbing skeletons and egg plants wearing sunglasses? Ummm...

or

As we expected, Compile's little mascot (whom we dubbed Ninji) has had his tongue-waving antics cut short in favour of Miyamoto's blob of pinkness. Now, who do you think we prefer?

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

As we stated back in issue 18 when we reviewed *Super Puyo Puyo*, Sega took the game and gave it a Dr Robotnik theme thus ensuring its success and making a heap of cash out of it.

"The cads!" we exclaimed.

"What a cynical and brutally obvious attempt to cash in on a big name," we cried.

"What a top idea," added Nintendo and promptly did exactly the same with their Kirby character.

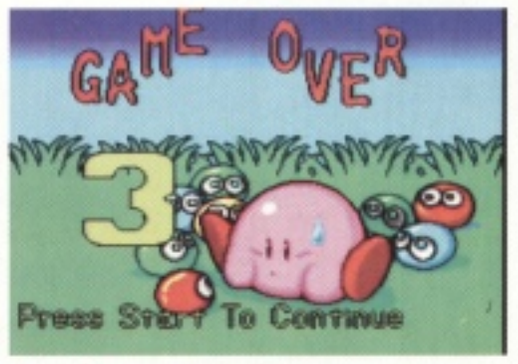
No matter. Despite the corporate rape of a perfectly good little Japanese game, this needless facelift has, if nothing else, ensured a worldwide release for the cart that will hopefully bring a level of success that a title of this quality deserved in the first place.

For those of you who foolishly disregarded our advice when we looked at the Japanese original, I will shamelessly "lift" bits of that review in order to hammer home the point.

"Like all good puzzles the idea is very

This is what you call a 'Full House.' I prefer to call it a Smartie carpet.

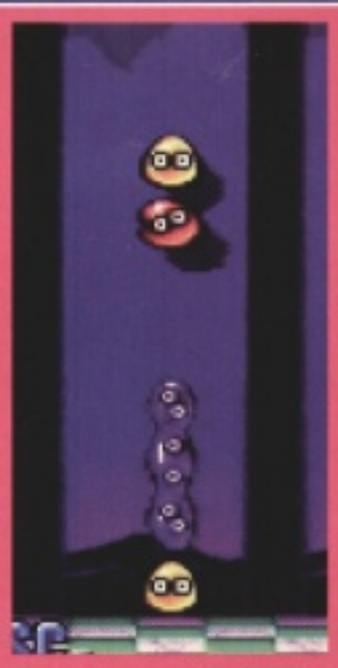
Yeah... don't mess with Kirby.



Oh... look. It makes my heart bleed. Aw.

THE CAR SALESMAN'S GUIDE TO PLAYING KIRBY'S AVALANCHE

So you want to trade in your old Puyo, eh? Hmm, well, I can see you're a man with taste and I've got this lovely new Kirby model over here. She's a beauty, isn't she? And what a little mover. Let me just show you a couple of her best features.

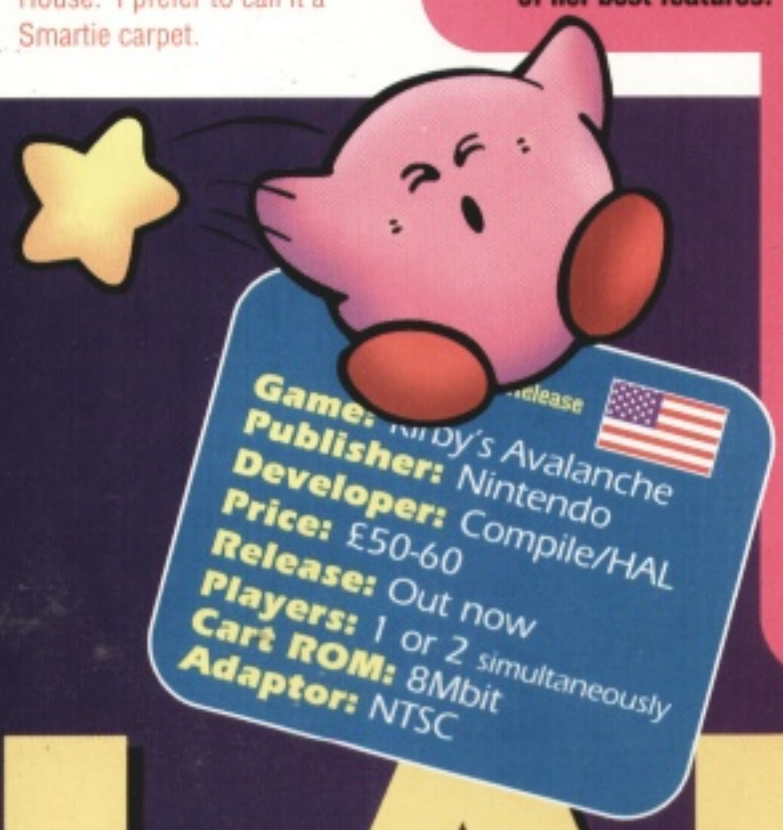


Course, this is yer basic four blob affair here. It's not a particularly sporty number, but the manufacturers use it because of the reliability, y'see.

If you want, Sir, we could upgrade her to this new twin stack system. The fact is, it's more efficient because you can attach a new set of blobs onto the top of both the stacks simultaneously. It's revolutionary really, but it'll cost ya.

However, might I recommend a little extra investment in this. It's been carefully designed so that when these lower blobs here disappear the uppermost ones come down and react also.

Of course if you really want to annoy the other players (and get the ladies all excited at the same time) you simply must consider the multiple chain reactor. It's poetry in motion. What's that, Sir? Same as your old one? Oh no, no, no, *no*... yes.



KIRBY'S AVALANCHE

simple. And like all good puzzles, it involves little coloured blocks falling from the sky. In this case the blocks are little blobby characters with eyes. They drop down in sets of two and you must arrange them in stacks at the bottom." Quite so. In this version, as in the original, the idea is simple... in fact it's identical. But what did our reviewer from way back when have to say on tactical matters?

"The four in a row connections don't have to be in a straight line. L shapes are acceptable, as are steps. The only thing that doesn't work is diagonals..." Snap! The rules, it would appear, remain the same. In fact, the immediate accessibility of the thing was something that weighed heavily in the game's favour. And as our old friend James Leach said all those months ago, whether it comes about through a wild stroke of beginner's luck or a well thought out piece of forward thinking, the best bit of all "...is the chain reaction. This works when you get a row of four which disappear, dropping those above into another row of four. If you're incredibly lucky/clever, you can get three chain reactions. Each time an excited Japanese voice is heard and you see loads of bubbles massing above the enemy's stacks."

OK, fair's fair, I'm just ripping off our first review. But I feel no shame in doing so. If anyone out there is obsessively protective about Kirby, then I'm sorry, but this game is identical to the Japanese original. The only differences are the front end (that's the technical term for all those awful intro bits that prevent you getting straight into your games), and the little character windows that appear behind each player's game area (where once there were anime characters, now there are Kirby ones).

Super Play's initial evaluation still applies, this is an immensely playable puzzler. It may be that a few people will be mightily annoyed that this superb piece of game design has been so cynically tampered with.

And worse still, some Kirby fans might be complete saddos and go up in arms about the fact that their hero has been so cynically exploited. But with luck, the attachment of the Kirby licence will merely entice a whole heap of people to take a good hard look at the game, people who normally wouldn't have given it the time of day.

● Andy Dyer

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
71%	73%	92%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	91%
91%		

VERDICT: Last time we looked at it, we said that consoles were made for games like this. The sentiment still applies. We may now be looking toward the super consoles for next generation thrills, but it only takes something like this to make you realise that good games are all about gameplay.

JUNGLE STRIKE

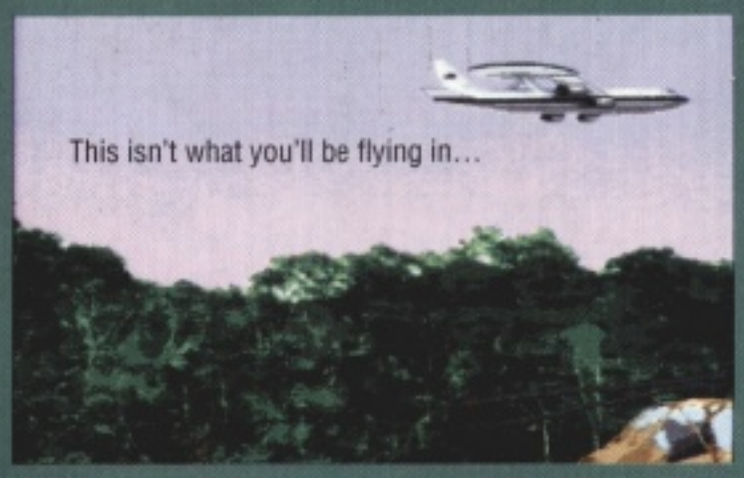
Helicopters are a versatile form of transport, allowing you to travel swiftly from A to B, destroy everything, and then return to A at tree-top height.

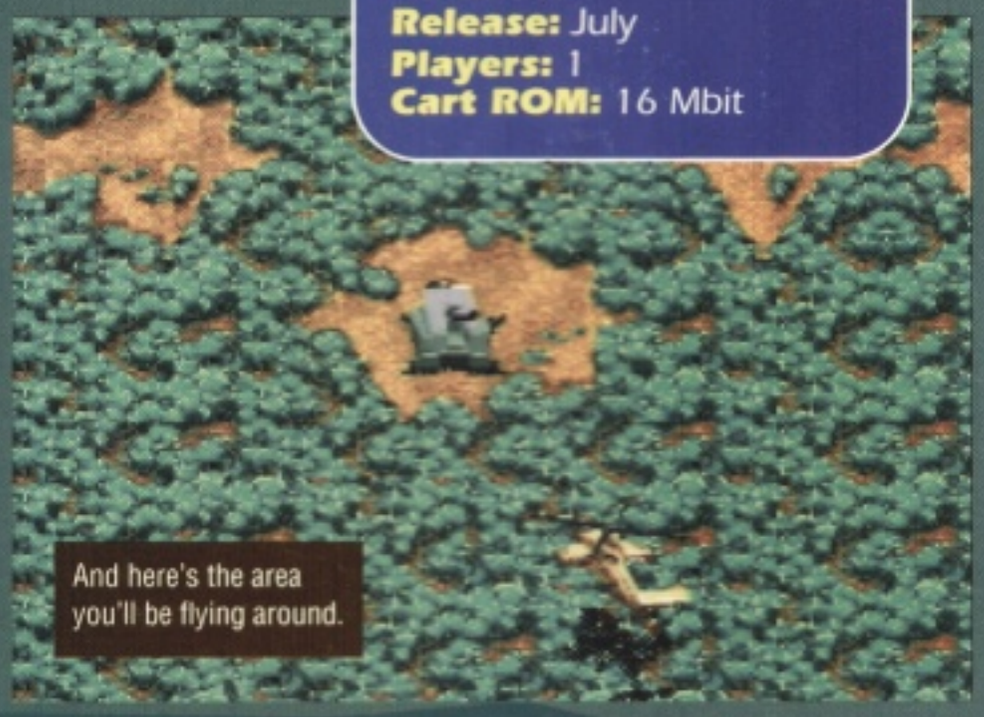
The jungle's a lonely place.

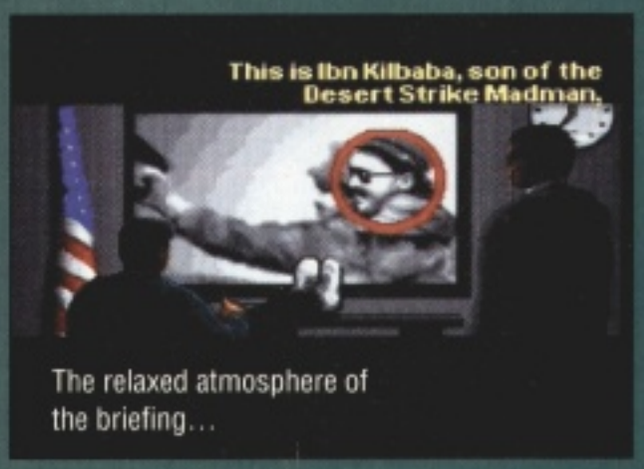
Few progressions could be as topographically abrupt as that from desert to jungle. Perhaps with this in mind, *Jungle Strike*'s nine levels ease the *Desert Strike* veteran in gently, with plenty of deserty bits and some watery ones too. The premise is that America is being invaded by a druglord's private army and – presumably – the nation's armed forces have all been mysteriously disabled. Apart from your helicopter, of course.

UK Release

Game: Jungle Strike
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Gremlin
Price: TBA
Release: July
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit




And here's the area you'll be flying around.



The relaxed atmosphere of the briefing...

IN AT THE DEEP END

Jungle Strike kicks off in Washington DC, which is under terrorist attack. You must single-handedly (for some reason) thwart the baddies, who, as it turns out, are acting at the behest of a druglord working in league with the baddy from *Desert Strike*. Washington looks curiously empty for the most important capital city in the world, but the White House is there, along with some terrorist headquarters which need blowing up, some car bombs and some unusually heavily-armed VW camper vans.

...in contrast to the tense mission...

The Pres' house.

And a blasted house.

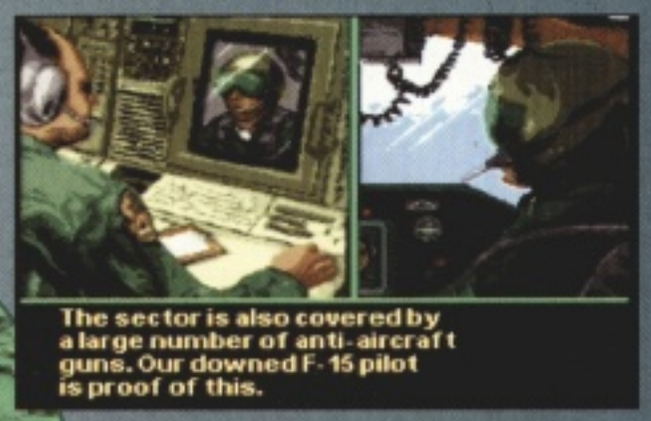
Mission complete. Hurrah.

GASP, PANT, WHEEZE

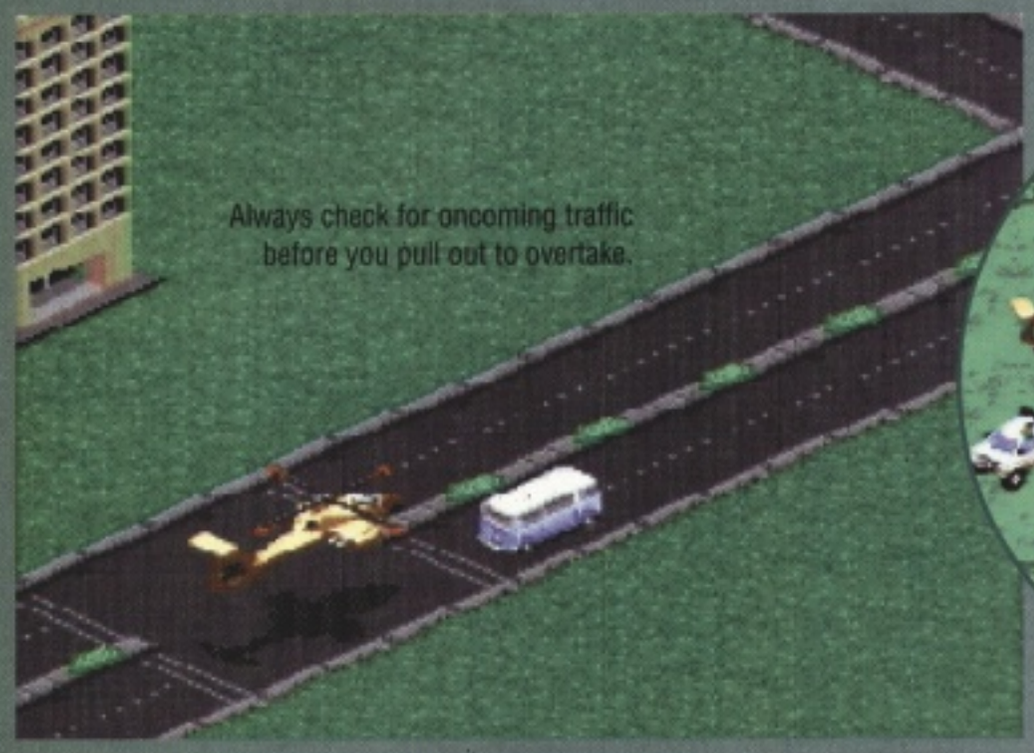
What is it with games? What's the point of having passwords at all if they're going to be absurdly long, full of mysterious Chinese symbols, and take anything up to three weeks to enter? Wouldn't it be quicker just to play through the game from the beginning? Or perhaps even program the whole thing yourself from scratch? Tsk.

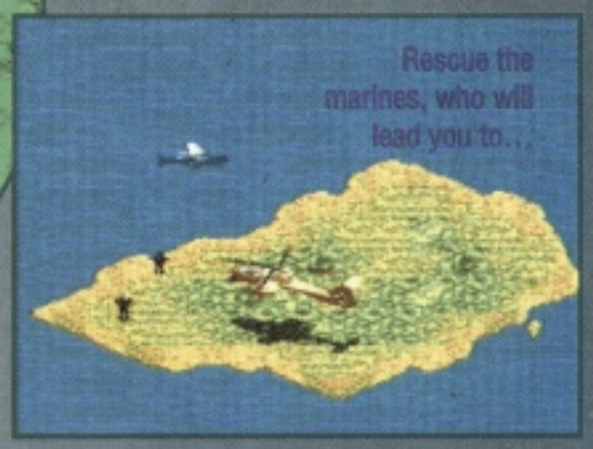
SUMMER HOLIDAY

Next, Level 2 sees you hovering by the coast amongst some pleasant little islands. Your helicopter isn't going to be much use here, through some dubious reason to do with air defences or something, but luckily there's a hovercraft which can be adapted to your needs. Then it's a case of tracking down and sinking enemy ships and submarines, and feeling slightly disappointed that the hovercraft isn't more interesting.


The sector is also covered by a large number of anti-aircraft guns. Our downed F-15 pilot is proof of this.

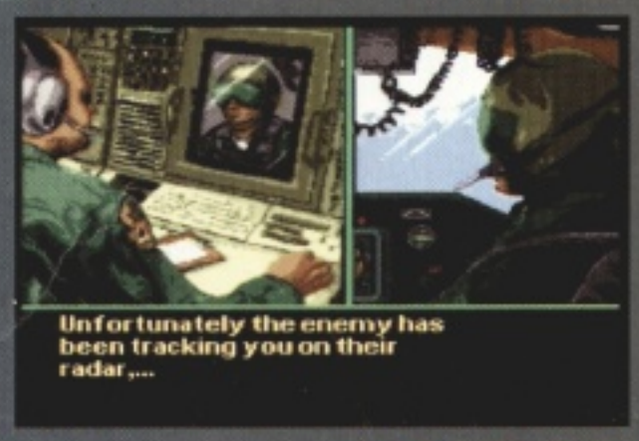
...Unless, of course, he was just a crap pilot.





TRAINING CAMP

Level 3 is set around the baddies' training camp, and is actually quite atmospheric, with watchtowers and makeshift roads in the sand. Enemy snipers tumble entertainingly from their towers when you shoot them, and 'Danger Zone' flashes on the screen if you wander into a particularly intense bit. The missions are pretty dull, though, mostly consisting of flying from one side of the map to the other to blow up a tank.


Unfortunately the enemy has been tracking you on their radar,...

Shoot the guard towers, so the guards will be rendered homeless.

Seize control of this base, with its attractive goldfish pond.

Drop the communications expert off by the telephone wires.

Show no mercy to these radar trucks. Kill them ruthlessly.

This picture again, but in a circle.

Reclaim the stolen F-117 stealth fighter from the airstrip and blow away their operations.

An F-117 on an airstrip – how handy.

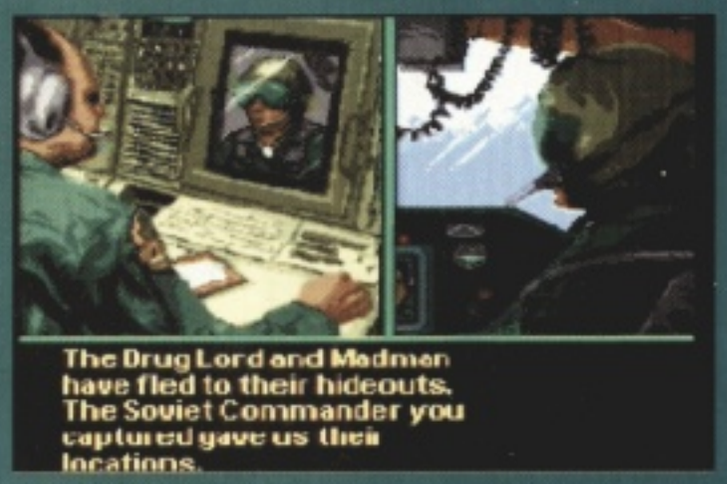
PLANE OR SHINE

Much later on, Level 7 gives you another new vehicle to toy with – the stealth fighter. It's secreted beneath some netting, and zooms off down the runway once you've clambered aboard. It doesn't seem particularly stealthy, though – within seconds, every gun in the area has locked on to it.

The scenery's quite attractive here, with proper jungle and some curious Aztec temples and sculptures and things.

CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN

Level 8 introduces itself as being set in the mountains. This is odd because, beyond a few small triangular rocks, it consists entirely of a flat expense of trees. Still, the plan here is to seek out and destroy some cruise missiles which have somehow fallen into enemy hands. Then, eventually, you've got to destroy the druglord's villa, which has armoured walls (ie, once you've taken out the defences you'll have to hover in front of it and fire off an absurd number of missiles before it explodes).



The Drug Lord and Madman have fled to their hideouts. The Soviet Commander you captured gave us their locations.

Mike Sierra: MR. 3-D
Mr.3-D can pluck the pimento out of an olive with the winch, but can't hit a white whale on a black background.
PRESS START TO EXIT

We suspect this may be an exaggeration.

TWO'S COMPANY

It can get lonely in the sky, with only the birds for company. And even they don't last long amongst your whirling rotors. Fortunately, however, you have a co-pilot, whose job it is to work the winch and guide the weapons. The one you start off with is a bit crap, though, and keeps missing things. So, you'll want to pick up a better one along the way.

Where does all the sand in the desert actually come from, incidentally? Write in if you know.

BEHOLD

Pressing Select pauses the game and, after further button-pressing, allows you to view one of the following Fantastic Screens...

Gasp! at the map which, curiously, is a completely different shape and size to the actual playing area.

Be amazed! by the mission briefings, one for each mission of the level.

Swoon! as you gaze upon the status screen, with its complete run-down of how you're doing on the various missions.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

On paper *Jungle Strike* is a better game than *Desert Strike*, which got a pretty impressive 90% in issue 4. But in the hallowed pages of *Super Play*, which transcend mere paper, it gets a lower score (although not hugely lower). How can this be? Read on and discover the substance of my reservations, which, in some cases, would be large enough to accommodate a whole tribe of native American Indians.

Desert Strike, first of all. I remember enjoying it tremendously, flying around in my helicopter and blowing things up. It was the first properly helicoptery game on the SNES, providing you with a vicious green machine that hung in the air, its rotor blades whirling, unleashing missile fury upon its desert-dwelling enemies in a way that only helicopters can.

That was over two years ago. The sequel has taken an awfully long time to reach the SNES, and, looking at it, it's difficult to see what's been holding it up.

Jungle Strike takes the basic *Desert Strike* formula and spruces it up in a number of ways...

The most obvious one is that you're not limited to flying around the desert the whole time. (Sand is pleasant enough stuff, but it can get a bit samey.) You've now got a whole selection of terrains to hover over, ranging from trees to snow, and, even if their differences are more cosmetic than tactical, wondering what will come next is a real incentive to finish the level you're on.

The next good thing is that *Jungle Strike* doesn't suffer from the slow-down which could bring *Desert Strike* brutally to its knees. More thoughtful programming is to thank for that.

Next, you're occasionally given the chance to shun your helicopter in favour of an alternative form of transport. This isn't as exciting as it sounds – the hovercraft isn't much different from the helicopter, and the stealth fighter, while it's got entertainingly unlimited weapons (presumably because the programmers couldn't think of a way of having it winch up supplies), dies instantly if it crashes into anything, which it tends to do tediously often because of the lack of warning of things about to scroll onto the screen – but at least it's something.

And lastly – and this is the real biggie – you've got a beefy nine levels, as opposed to *Desert Strike*'s distinctly salad-like four.

Underneath all that, though, *Jungle Strike* is still the same great game as its predecessor: the same enjoyable blend of action and strategy. It confronts you with an endless series of dilemmas. Do you drop your passengers back at base and top up your armour, or risk attacking that missile battery while you're on this side of the map to save fuel? And so on.

So – 93%? 94%?

No.

One thing that bothers me is that the levels are all organised in the same way as *Desert Strike*'s, each one comprising a series of simple missions (blow up a couple of huts, perhaps) eventually building up to the hard ones at the end (sink a submarine, maybe). This is okay for the first couple of levels, but then begins to get a bit tedious. You don't want to have to keep flying from one end of the map to the other performing menial tasks you know perfectly well you're capable of, and whose purpose seems to be simply to gnaw away at your lives, especially when *Jungle Strike* features similarly irritating 'no-win' situations to *Desert Strike*. (For example, on one level you've got to blow up cars carrying bombs before they reach their targets. If you fail, however – which could be due to the car taking an absurd number of hits to destroy, or your co-pilot pointlessly guiding your weapons to innocent police cars and things for no apparent reason – and the terrorists' target is hit, you've lost and have to begin the level again. Grr.)

Another is the way the artificially-limited view of your surroundings frequently and unfairly lands you in trouble. The size of the screen only allows you to see things within a radius of three or four helicopter-lengths, which means that a) you're constantly getting shot at by things you can't see because they're off the screen, b) it's too easy to crash into obstacles that suddenly loom up in front of you, especially in the stealth fighter, and, worst of all, c) navigating anywhere means constantly having to flip between the map screen and the playing screen, and even then you can pass within inches of your target without realising it. What's urgently, desperately needed is some sort of see-through scanner that's on the screen all the time.

Mainly, though, it's the wasted potential. They could have built up a great storyline with you journeying from level to level, perhaps revisiting old ones to attack new targets, collecting clues to lead you to a huge underwater base at the end, or something. Instead it's just: "Here's a new level, here're all the things you've got to do, off you go and do them", along with some vacuous wibble about a drug lord. Instead of wasting time with hovercrafts and aeroplanes, they could have concentrated on improving your helicopter, giving it more weapons and things – as it stands it's exactly the same as the one in *Desert Strike* (except, for some reason, you can't 'jink'). When *Jungle Strike* gets harder, it's simply because there are more baddies to kill and fewer weapons to do it with, rather than because any extra deviousness is required on your part. They could have designed some nicely fiendish puzzles, where you've got to deduce where things are and how best to approach and attack them rather than automatically being shown them on the map.

Basically, *Jungle Strike* is *Desert Strike*, only instead of doing the same thing four times, you've got to do it nine times. It's good, and technically better than *Desert Strike*, but at the same time slightly disappointing. Hence, two years on, with the stakes raised, it gets a slightly lower score.

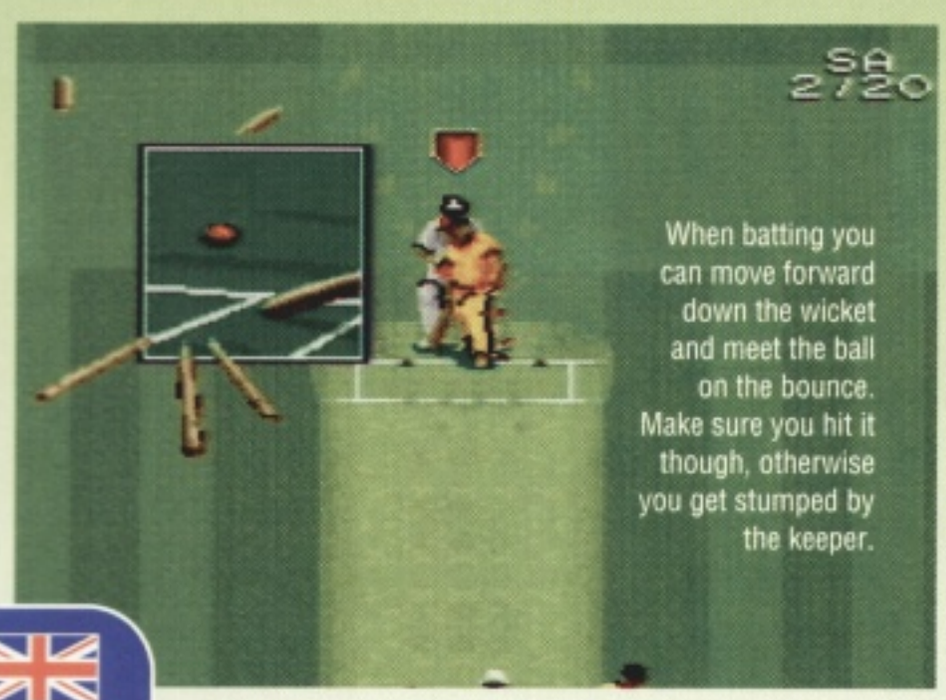
● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	69%	85%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	83%
80%		

VERDICT: *Desert Strike* again, but more so. Which means it's not worth buying in addition to *Desert Strike*, but is certainly the game to get instead of it.

SUPER INTERNATIONAL CRICKET

Summer is wiping its feet on the doorstep and the nation prepares for the sound of leather on willow. Some are looking forward to the cricket too.



When batting you can move forward down the wicket and meet the ball on the bounce. Make sure you hit it though, otherwise you get stumped by the keeper.

ARE YOU WAVING AT YOUR MUM?

A jaunty wave of the umpire's arm signals a four. They stick both arms in the air when you hammer a six. I haven't got one. Yet.

A shake of the umpire's head means you're safe. Cheats shouldn't have claimed you were out anyway.

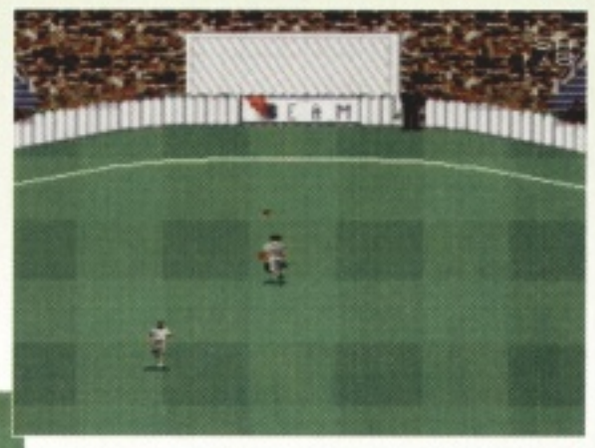
Step over the white line and old 'umpi' calls a wide, and you bowl the ball again.

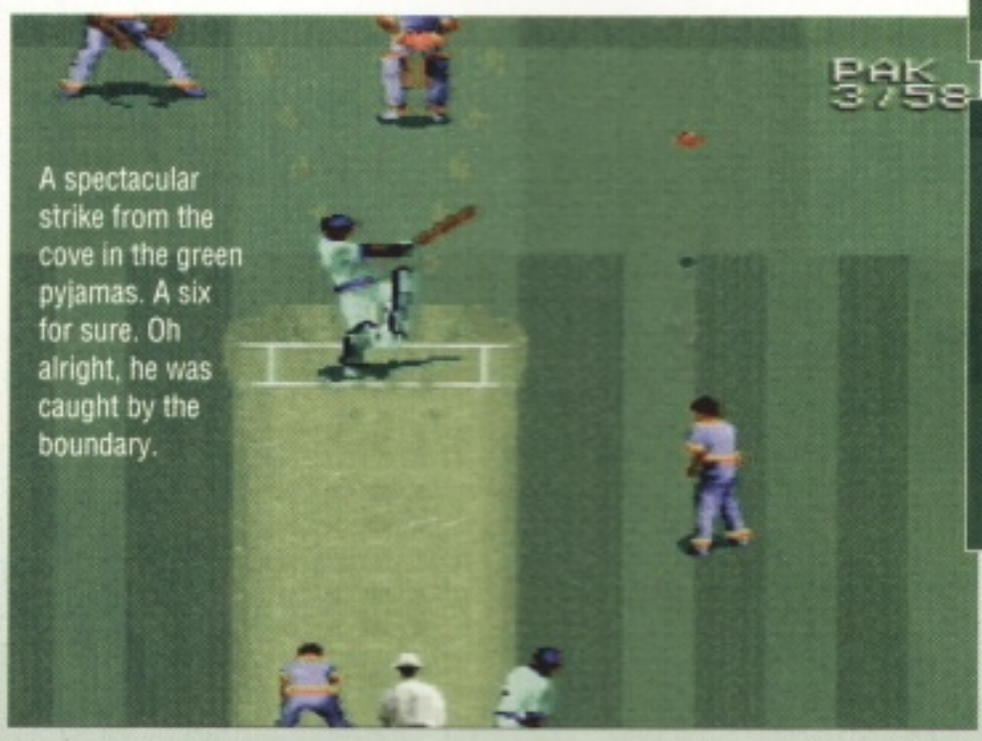
"Howzat," you cry, and the chap in the butcher's hat agrees. Big-handed fellow, isn't he?

UK Release

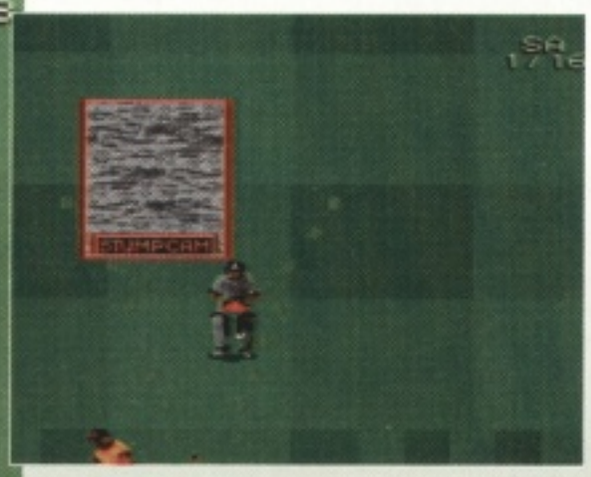
Game: Super International Cricket
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Beam Software
Price: £TBA
Release: June
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

When the really pacey bowlers are on, the wicket keepers occasionally miss the ball and have to peg towards the boundary.





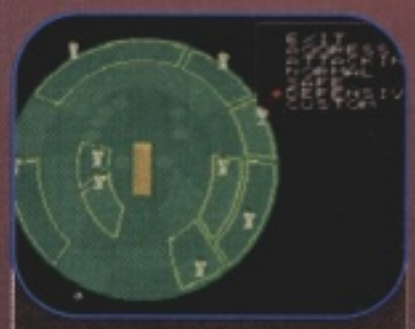
A spectacular strike from the cove in the green pyjamas. A six for sure. Oh alright, he was caught by the boundary.



Terribly technological, these things. A mini camera is fitted into the wicket and, well, you're treated to close-ups of the batsman's bottom.

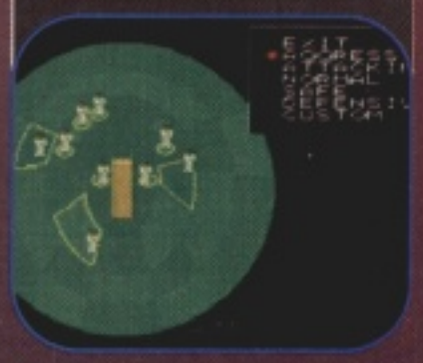
FIELD LIKE A CHANGE?

Use the giant hand to move your fielders about the pitch. Watch their arms and legs wiggle as you do...



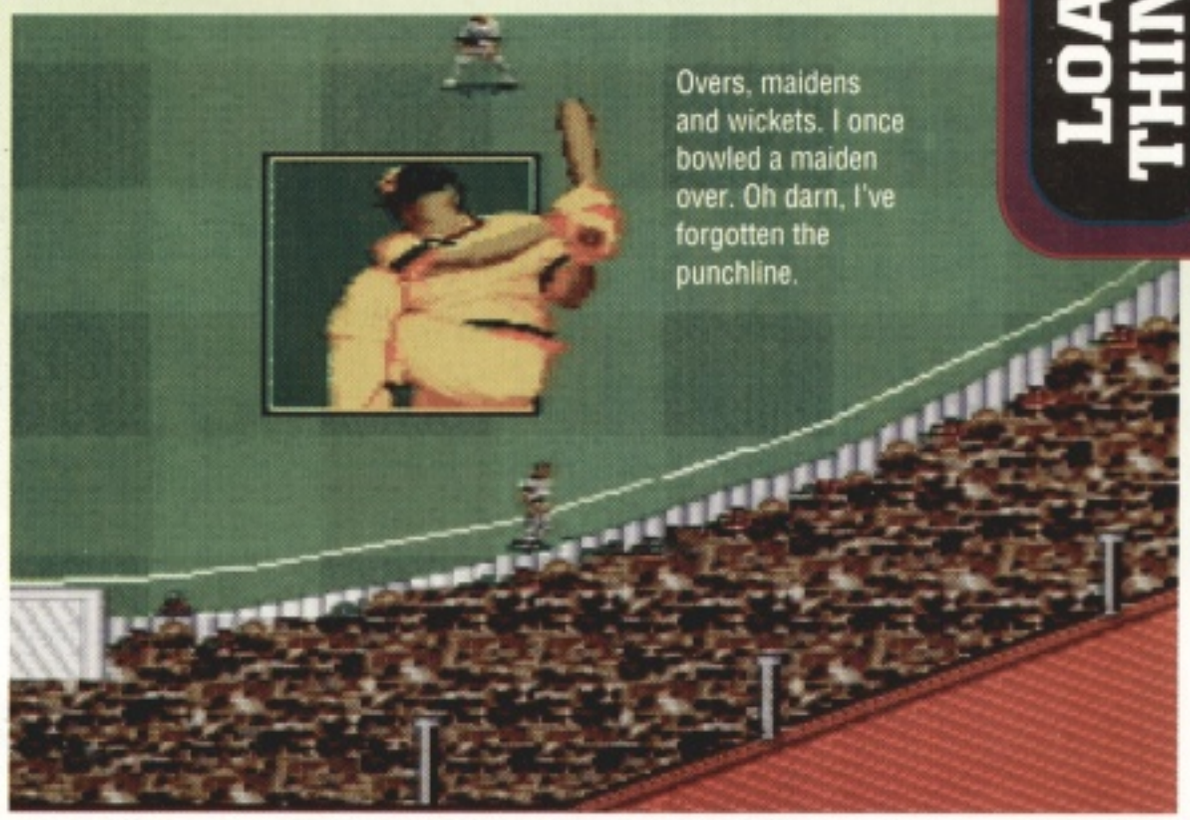
The defensive field formation shoves most of the chaps back toward the boundary – safe from harm's way.

Surround the batsmen and hope they panic with the aggressive fielding pattern.



You can pick up the players by the head and watch their arms and legs waggle frantically. Glorious fun. Oh, and you can move them where you wish too.

Each team has stats for the various cricketing disciplines. You may choose the ones with the honest faces, though.



Overs, maidens and wickets. I once bowled a maiden over. Oh darn, I've forgotten the punchline.

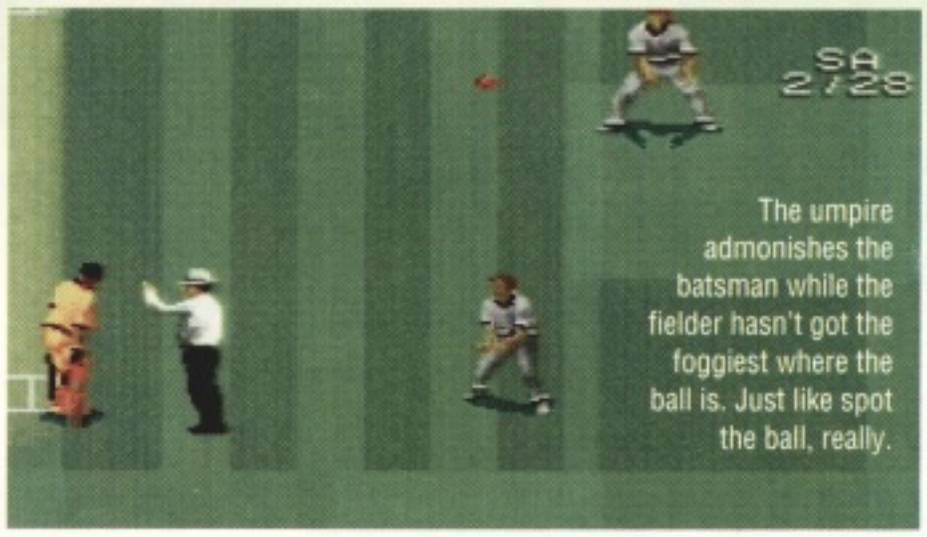
LOADS OF AMUSING THINGS HAPPEN TOO!

Do the duck walk after failing to register.

Blow your own trumpet, exclaimed the correspondent with alarming predictability.

The beer-swigging funsters in the crowd cheer the boundaries.

The bowlers ask the umpire if you're out with unnecessary regularity. But the man in the middle usually sees through rotten 'gamesmanship'.



The umpire admonishes the batsman while the fielder hasn't got the foggiest where the ball is. Just like spot the ball, really.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Hands up who knows the rules? Yes, you there. Shout up, man. Sir, there are two teams of 11 fellows. One team bats, the other fields. Most of the batting team sit in the pavilion, while the majority of the fielders stand around kicking their heels and sucking their teeth waiting for the batsmen to whack a jolly hard leather ball at them. Oh, and one chap gets to bowl the ball but only six on the trot, mind.

So... cricket then. A blindingly simple game yet darned complex at the same time. Googlies, beamers, silly mid-on (and off), out-for-a-duck – heavens to Betsy, it even has its own language. And it stops for tea, then gets the players to wander back out and play well (or badly) into the evening until a man dressed not dissimilar to the chap behind the counter at Dewhursts tells them to stop and come back tomorrow because it's too dark.

Super International Cricket sensibly addresses the difficult task of translating a game played with religious fervour on village greens and Sky TV into a video game. Complicated, cumbersome and overly fussy it could have been. It isn't. *SIC* (if I may so boldly refer to it as from this juncture – and it sounds great, doesn't it) is an out-and-out arcade bash, brash of graphic, bouncy of sound and warm-spirited to boot. You can play this game within minutes of clutching the joypad because it is THAT SIMPLE. Four choices of batting stroke – defensive, thrusting forward drive, hook and cut. Bowling. Easy as pie. Direct the arrow where you want the ball to bounce and off you trot. And you can move the ball left or right slightly once it's been delivered and you can thwack the ball with a touch more power, a little more lift, but importantly, *SIC* concentrates its energy on that often elusive facet known as FUN.

Cricket. Console. Sure, it adds up to three, and I'd be tugging wool over your lids if I were to suggest you'll be playing this with equal fervour months from now, but *SIC* is quite a charmer. The graphical touches make it so, with ducks waddling across the screen, batsmen collapsing after a ball smacks them in the midriff and when you custom edit the field, a huge hand picks up the players by the head, their arms and legs waggling frantically. Not enough humour about in the old video games these days, what?

SIC is surprisingly addictive in one-player mode and with three difficulty levels, you can enter the crease with confidence, while, as is the way with sports sims, the two-player mode is where the glory lies. There is immense satisfaction to be gained by hooking a pal's attempted bouncing head dismantler over the boundary for six.

The usual sporty options are in the kit bag including tournaments, tests and team-picking (no tea, though) so quibbling here would be fruitless. No, if there is a sticky wicket, it lies on the fourth floor in the lack-of-depth department. It's all a little too bland to refresh the palette regularly, simply because there are so few choices one can make during play, and the bowling in particular suffers because you can't adjust pace during the over.

Oh, we're bickering now. Look, this is a game to be chalked in for a couple of run outs a week. Don't expect to discover the Science of Cricket here, just settle back and swing the bat with abandon.

● Steve Bradley

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
81%	79%	81%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	77%
72%		

VERDICT: A thoroughly entertaining and amusing cricket sim, if occasionally limiting, sounds about right. Yes.

No sooner have we recovered from the double-barrelled onslaught that was Front Mission and Chrono Trigger than the Japanese RPG masters unveil their next blockbuster. Is there no stopping Squaresoft?

SECRET OF MANA 2

Seiken Densetsu 3 (Holy Sword Legend 3)

Squaresoft Japan ● 32Mbit

START HERE FOR TRIANGLE STORY

Secret of Mana 2, the third RPG in the *Seiken Densetsu* series, is almost finished. To create the game, Square assembled the original team once more: Mr Tanaka, who worked on *Romancing SaGa 2* and was the producer of *Secret of Mana*; and Mr Ishii, who developed the first *Seiken Densetsu* game on the Game Boy. Both of them were behind the first three *Final Fantasy* games in Japan, and have brought their experience to bear on the A-RPG genre. Now read on for an insight into the game you've all been waiting for...

Above left: If YOU had 426 hit points you'd probably feel confident enough to take on the gods too.

Above: being high enough to see the curve of the world is very high indeed. Try to avoid orbiting satellites.

A BIT OF A LOOKER

When we first previewed *Chrono Trigger* we pondered the remarkable similarity of its characters and visuals to that of *Secret of Mana* – so much so that we had to ask ourselves if it was indeed *Mana 2*. Conversely, the real *Secret of Mana 2* seems to borrow from *Chrono Trigger*'s graphical style, particularly in respect of its highly detailed backgrounds and the pseudo-three-dimensional perspective of some scenes.

"The basic graphics structure is similar to *Mana*, but the new one is like 3D. We concentrated on putting depth into the look of the whole game, and we tried to make graphics that are more beautiful than a Walt Disney movie. But we didn't want to use too much black for shadows. Instead we expressed shading with blues and violets, which makes the graphics soften. Black would have made it look too sharp." The intention behind Mr Ishii's designs was not to make realistic, true-to-life graphics – as seems to be the current aim in computer and video games – but to achieve the bold bright style of an animation. The attitude was the same in *Secret of Mana*, but the smaller cart ROM size limited the graphical detail possible. With 32 megabits at his disposal, Mr Ishii could give free reign to his imagination this time around.

Below: Angela, Lisa and Kevin tackle some wet fish on an icy plateau.

TURN OVER FOR MORE CHARACTERS AND A BIZARRE LOVE TRIANGLE

MEET THE GANG, COS THE GANG'S ALL HERE

The game's promotional artwork and character designs are the work of Noboteru Yuuki, one of our favourite illustrators and the man responsible for the acclaimed *Record Of Lodoss War* (see this month's Anime World, p.20) and Manga Video's recently released *Angel Cop* (reviewed in Irresponsible Pictures, p. 76).

Duran

Weapon: Sword
Origin: Forsena – the kingdom of plains
Most of this land is covered by grassy plains and has a mild climate. Swordsmanship is an admired and much-practised skill in the country of Forsena, which was founded by a soldier a long time ago. The King boasts an army of knights, to which Duran (whose father was the king's best friend) was recently recruited.
Characteristics:
Duran's a heroic archetype, but his temper is short and he can be rash and careless of others' feelings. He's competent with a blade, but he wishes to become more adept as a mark of respect to his deceased father and must take part in the Forsena tournament held once a year. What accident befell Duran to steal his pride?

Angela

Weapon: Magic Staff
Origin: Artena, the land of magic
A snowbound realm of eternal winter, Artena is inaccessible when the blizzards are raging at its borders. But the Queen, Angela's mother, possesses immense magical powers with which she keeps the climate warm in the city: hence the people revere her. The secret of her power is an ancient talisman called the Mana Stone.
Characteristics: Angela's a capable sorceress whose battle magic is impressive, but she's selfish and sulks easily. She was denied her mother's love as a child and still yearns for a surrogate. If she doesn't get attention when she wants it, she'll often try something dangerous or crazy to get it.

BIZARRE LOVE TRIANGLE

Secret of Mana 2 uses what its designers refer to as the 'Triangle Story'. Six completely new characters appear in *Secret of Mana 2*, although you can only choose just three of them. Once the party is established, you'll stick with those three characters throughout the entire game, although you'll meet the other three as Non-Player Characters. Your choice of characters influences the path the story will take, so you can play a different game each time by selecting new combinations (a hasty spot of maths suggests that twenty different party line-ups are possible).

The designers claim that "as far as the story goes, there's not much difference in the middle part; but depending on the hero you choose, the ending changes in three different ways." Rather fittingly for the third title in the *Mana* series, three is a key number throughout the game.

The encroaching war also plays a major part in the development of the story. Three countries are at war, whilst three begin the game as neutral territories. Some of the six characters' home countries have already been invaded or will be invaded in the middle of the game, but others are completely safe. Simply put, the hero you choose decides his or her country's future. This is just another aspect of the Triangle Story.

The relationships between the three characters will evolve during the game, and they may not necessarily start out liking each other. "Most of them have problems because we wanted to express their mental growth and we made them have complexes," according to Mr Ishii. "Because of their same ages, if you mix boys with girls to organise a team, there will be a problem." It's even possible for members of a mixed sex party to fall in love with each other (although we understand that, er, it's unlikely to occur in an all-male or all-female team).

Right: Hawkeye, Charlotte and Lisa look for Secret Things behind the waterfalls in a scene reminiscent of Gaia's Navel.

Left: the multi-tap option and the ring menu system will remain in *Mana 2*.

WE WANT YOU TO CRY

Apparently the theme of *SOM 2* is independence. As the game progresses you follow the development of the main characters. All that and bashing monsters too.

Secret of Mana 2 hasn't yet been completed, and the programmers are still working hard to perfect the multifarious scenarios. Discussing the storyline, Mr Ishii and his associates claimed to have spent a long time working on the subtler points of the narrative because they 'want you to cry about the story'. That might seem a little odd for a video game: but players familiar with *Final Fantasy III* will know that Square games can indeed prove moving and melodramatic, thanks to strong characters and an involving story.

Charlotte

Weapon: Morning Star Flail
Origin: the holy city of Wendel

The City of Saints is full of strict rules and observances, but the sick and injured from all over the land make pilgrimages to the City's shrine which holds a relic known as the Venus of Mana. The Priest of Light, who governs the city, is like a god to them.

Characteristics: Charlotte's small childish looks are a result of her faery blood, although she's actually fifteen years old and the granddaughter of the Priest of Light. Her real skill is white magic and curing the sick, and she's very extroverted. Charlotte is curious about everything but sometimes timid and superstitious.

Hawkeye

Weapon: Twin Daggers
Origin: Navarre, the Sand Kingdom

The country of thieves is surrounded by parched desert sands. Its leader, Flame Kahn, is a Robin Hood type who organises his gang to steal from the rich and give to the poor. He's always been respected for this but, recently, a rumour has spread that he's no longer so discerning in his choice of target.

Characteristics: Hawkeye was brought up in a gang of thieves, but unlike Duran he's got a cheerful and romantic disposition and is considerate to all of his friends. Although he's a thief, he's mature enough to understand that you can't steal such qualities as trust and respect. His skills and equipment are those of a ninja.

AS TIME GOES BY

Daytime, and the icefloes are visible off the coast.

Then, as evening draws in, dusky colours taint the horizon until...

... nightfall, and nothing can be seen but the lights burning in simple folk's hearths.

A new and intriguing feature for *Secret of Mana 2* is the inclusion of real-time. Like Capcom's *Breath of Fire*, the game reflects the passage of time during each day. Exploiting the superior colour palette of the SNES, the shading of the graphics changes regularly to represent one of three time phases: morning, evening and night. It's most apparent when flying around on Flammie, when the sky is visible and you can (for example) see the lights shining from the windows of the houses below during the night. But it's more than a cosmetic touch, as the time will affect such things as Kevin's human-to-beast transformation. When you meet the inhabitants of a city you'll find them engaged in different chores, depending on the time of day. Moreover, certain special events will only be revealed to you if you're in the right place at the right moment. It's a feature which helps to make the world of *Mana* more convincing. Although the role-playing game is established in fantasy, the goal of every decent RPG is to create a believable and interactive world which continues to exist in its entirety even though you can only experience, through your character's presence, one small part of it at any one time.

MOTION BATTLE SYSTEM Mk.II

By spreading the status displays, more info can be shown without needing to check a static screen.

Every game in the *Mana* series is an action RPG, with a combat system more akin to *Zelda* or *Illusion of Time* than the turn-based battles of *Final Fantasy*. But *Mana*'s Motion Battle System has been improved for the sequel: according to Square it will be faster but easier to use.

"We wanted to do what we couldn't realise in *Final Fantasy*. For example, if battle scenes are separated from normal scenes, players are divorced from reality. And in *FF*'s battle scenes, there was no feeling of approaching enemies... We wanted to solve this problem. *FF*'s battle system is good for planning strategies, but the expression of fighting wasn't good enough. To get involved in battle scenes, actions are really important. This is our slogan for the *Mana* series."

The designers opted to limit each character's abilities in the sequel. Whilst the characters of *Secret of Mana* could pick up and learn to use any of the weapons in the game, *Mana 2*'s characters have their own specialist weapons with which they become more adept during the game. They also have limitations in the magic available to them. Rather than learn all types of magic, as in *SOM*, *Mana 2*'s characters focus on a particular branch of magic and learn all their spells within that field. Not all the characters can use magic, either. The result of this limitation is that the player has to bear in mind the strengths and weaknesses of his party and plan how their combined efforts can best defeat the enemies.

The combat system might look similar to *Mana*, but the engine is actually completely different. Square's giving very little away at present, but it would seem to combine the best elements of *Chrono Trigger* whilst keeping the battles action-based.

TURN OVER FOR THE RETURN OF FLAMMIE AND MORE MANA SECRETS

Lisa

Weapon: Spear
Origin: the wind realm of Lorant
Resting on the side of a mountain, Lorant has an ancient history. It has always been guarded by a band of Amazons because the God of the Mountain only trusts women. Lisa's father Joster saved the country many years ago but was blinded in battle, and his achievements have allowed him to become King.
Characteristics: Lisa isn't a princess in the traditional fantasy role: she's leader of the Amazons and well equipped to take care of herself. Her training for rulership gives her a strong will and a sense of responsibility, but she's sometimes obstinate and hard to please. The most capable fighter of the female characters.

Kevin

Weapon: Claw
Origin: Beast Kingdom
The people of the Beast Kingdom are lycanthropes – they look normal enough during the day, but at night they transmogrify into half-human, half-animal hybrids. It's always dark here, and the Beast King rules the state with the backing of a much-feared army.
Characteristics: Kevin is a fierce fighter after dark, when his feral side takes over and turns him into a brutal killing machine: but he regards his nature as a curse, preventing him from leading a normal life, and seeks to overcome it during the course of the game. Although he appears grown-up there's a very childish nature to him.

RE-ENTER THE DRAGON

Flammie, the young dragon who was raised to adulthood by the King of Matango in the first game, returns for *Mana 2* (by popular demand of enamoured Japanese gamers, it seems). By summoning Flammie, your party can fly on his back to any part of the world, although he won't be at your beckoning until half-way through the game.

Dragonflight has been much improved for *Mana 2*. Whilst the impressive scrolling and scaling Mode 7 terrain remains below you, the screen also shows two map overlays. The top left map displays the entire world, your position and direction of flight; whilst the top right map shows the immediate vicinity enlarged and in greater detail. A text window in the bottom of the screen even gives you the name of the nearest known city or village, so it should prevent all those annoying moments when you'd land in the wrong place or get lost flying across the ocean.

The Mode 7 terrain is so clear that you can fly low enough to follow the road into town...

The country of Altena is often sealed off by blizzards on all sides (below).

Japanese *Mana* toys were much in demand two years ago, thanks to Flammie's cloying but undeniable cuteness.

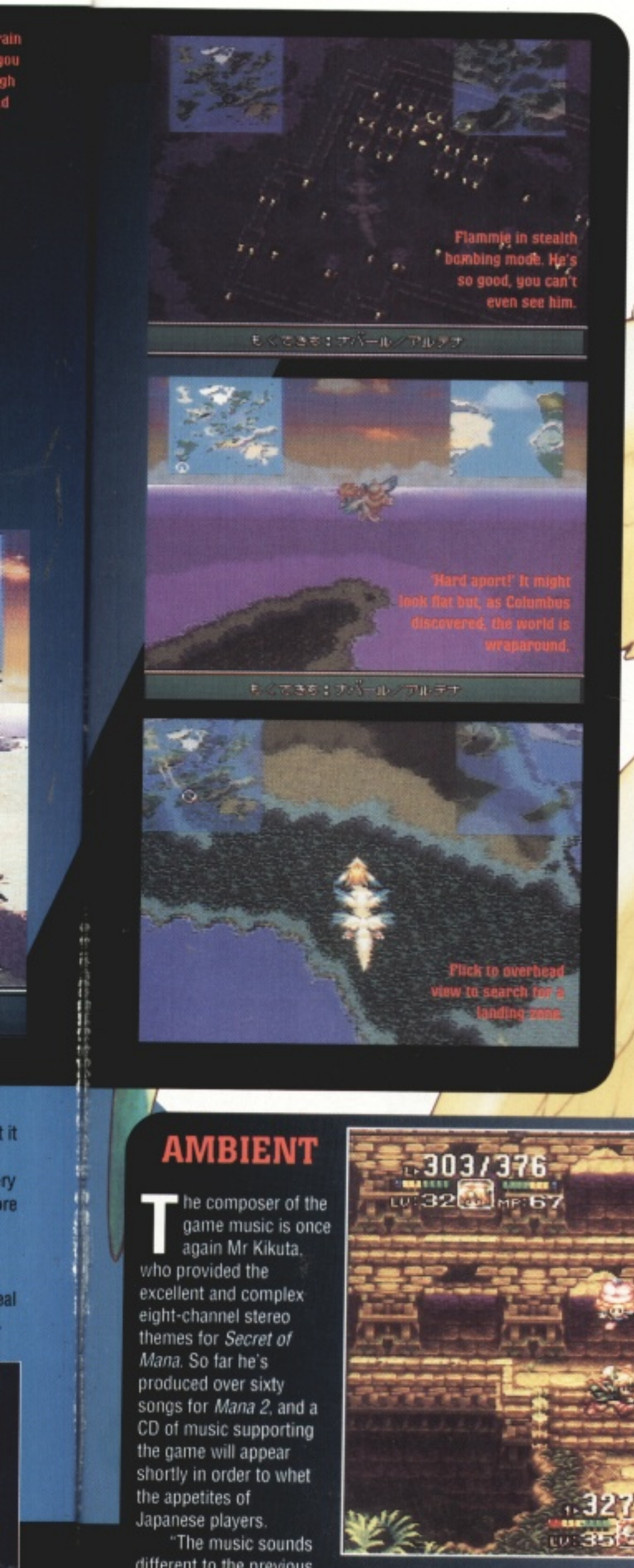
MONSTERS, SIR?

As you'll see from Noboteru Yuuki's character designs, the original line-up of boy, girl and sprite-child has gone. Neither can the story be considered a continuation or true sequel, in any sense. But *Secret of Mana 2* is not entirely unrelated to its predecessors. It works in much the same way as the *Final Fantasy* games, which have no common background or narrative connection but repeat certain elements throughout the series, like the crystals and the chocobos. For example, monsters such as the Rabites and the Mushroom Men which graced the first two *Mana* games appear once more in *Mana 2*.

The notion of Mana flowing through the world is also very important to the series. Both the Mana Tree and the Mana Sword appear in the new game. The Mana Beast is sealed in eight stones, and a legend states that it will destroy the world.

But the additional 16 megabits has allowed for every aspect of the game to be made bigger, brighter and more detailed. *Mana 2* features 100 different monsters, all designed by Mr Ishii, and he's particularly proud of his boss characters. The final boss promises to be a real eye-opener, as he's giving nothing away and won't reveal it until *Mana 2* is actually finished and on sale in Japan.

Blimey, imagine the size of the crabstick you could make from this Full Metal Hugger.


Flammie in stealth bombing mode. He's so good, you can't even see him.
もくてきち：ナバール／アルテナ
'Hard apart!' It might look flat but, as Columbus discovered, the world is wraparound.
もくてきち：ナバール／アルテナ
Flick to overhead view to search for a landing zone.

We always thought that Mana was a gert lush thing, but a quick comparison of similar desert scenes highlights the dramatic improvements made in *Secret of Mana 2*.

AMBIENT

Duran and his friends would run faster without such big hair, we reckon.

The composer of the game music is once again Mr Kikuta, who provided the excellent and complex eight-channel stereo themes for *Secret of Mana*. So far he's produced over sixty songs for *Mana 2*, and a CD of music supporting the game will appear shortly in order to whet the appetites of Japanese players.

"The music sounds different to the previous two because we didn't want to repeat the same old thing. The efficiency of the hardware doesn't change, however, so there are limitations. In the previous one we tried to put clear stereo hi-fi music, but this time we wanted you to hear each instrument." As a result of determined experimentation, Mr Kikuta worked out how to make the most of the deep bass tones and claims to be very happy with the result. Players will be advised to run the game through a stereo with decent headphones or a hyper bass function to make the most of the soundtrack.

HOW LONG MUST WE WAIT?

Sadly the Japanese release date still hasn't been finalised, and it may be many months away. An American translation is inevitable, but what of the game's PAL release? It's now very clear that Nintendo UK's official launch of *Secret of Mana* was simply too slow: US cartridges were available through grey importers over a year beforehand, many of which then shifted hands several times through second-hand sales and game exchanges. British sales of the game were immensely disappointing as a result, as any RPG fans worth their salt had already tracked it down and played it through an adaptor. If Nintendo UK intends to capitalise on its special deal with Square of America, it will have to get its act together a bit faster this time with *Secret of Mana 2*.

YOU HEARD IT

News from the USA - 1st pictures and news of Ultra 64 AND new Playstation and Saturn games!

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SNES TECH & GAMING GAMEFREAK

By Tony Mott

Fear not, Super Play citizen – Gamefreak is here to answer your gaming questions and save any cute kittens lodged in trees.

From Ian Duell, Eastleigh, Hants:
Q I've heard that there will be a *Super Metroid 2* on the SNES. Is this true, and if so when will it be out?
A I understand it's on its way, but not until Christmas at least.

From Garh Poon, Hornchurch, Essex:
Q Does it really take 70 hours to complete *Secret Of Mana*?
A Nope, Alan Brett got it down to around 20 hours.
Q In one of your old issues – in *Fantasy Quest* – you called *Secret Of Mana Holy Sword Legend 2*. Does this mean that there's a *Holy Sword Legend 1*?
A Yes, it does. It was on the Game Boy and I bought it originally under the name of *Mystic Quest*. Square have since renamed it *Final Fantasy Adventure* to make it appear more a part of the Final Fantasy series.

From Mauan Mahguib, Tunbridge Wells, Kent:
Q After reading the review of *Front Mission* I really wanted it, but I can't understand Japanese. Will this matter at all?
A No, it's quite playable (and indeed finishable) in its native form, although there are lots of little bits and pieces which are easily missable if you can't read Japanese text.
Q I have a UK SNES and a Universal Adaptor. I've used it to play many foreign games, like *Secret Of Mana*, *FFIII* etc. with no problems – will *Front Mission* work with it?
A No. (We couldn't find any adaptor which would keep it going beyond the first level.)

From Christophe Truffert, Somewhere on the 'net:
Q I read in a foreign magazine that *Secret Of Mana 2* was actually going to be called *Secret Of Evermore*. Is this true?
A No, *Evermore* is only related by the fact that it's a Square game and an RPG.

From David Lawrence, Letchworth, Herts:
I'm new to the world of the SNES and I am hoping you could answer some questions I have regarding the US SNES that I'm about to go out and buy:
Q Can you play UK games on an American machine without an adaptor?
A Blimey, what a refreshing question. No you can't, but you'll be able to use all Japanese carts on it.
Q Do you have to buy imported joypads to use with a US machine, or will UK ones work?
A UK pads work fine.
Q Why can't I win on that pesky National Lottery? (Any tips?)
A Well, some geezers round the corner from where I used to live have just picked up £2.7 million (jammy bleeders) and they picked their winning numbers from passing car number plates. Does that help? Thought not.

From Andrew Crane, Bournemouth:
Q What game should I get for my brother's birthday? He loved all the Mario games, *Metroid 3*, *Mystical Ninja* and *Secret Of Mana*, so he'd like something similar, unfrustrating, and PAL?
A Platformer? *Plok!* ARPG? *Illusion Of Time*. Happy? Good. And don't forget *my* birthday soon – all cards and pressies gratefully received.
Q Will the finished version of the Ultra 64 use those nice memory card things? Using those built-in battery backup systems is so restrictive.
A Well, it would make sense, considering that cartridge costs rise even further with BBs and Nintendo will have a tough time keeping costs down anyway. Wait till next month when we'll have full specs on the beast.

Home Alone – just one of the many T*HQ titles that totally fails to impress absolutely nobody. It's cack, believe me.

From Harry Shave, Rochester, Kent:
Q Will you be doing a guide to *Mana*?
A There was talk of running one a while back, but it's since fallen by the wayside. Perhaps the game is getting on a bit now… If you lot demand it, then p'raps we can coerce the mighty Zyster into getting on the case.
Q I've just bought *Equinox* but I can't see it anywhere in What Cart. What do you think of it?
A I think it's great; a unique look and feel, a haunting Tim Follin soundtrack and puzzles by the sackful – what else can you ask for? I'm surprised that it didn't pave the way for a slew of isometric SNES games. Look out for *Ladystalker*, though, which looks like it could well replicate its quality.
Q Have T*HQ produced any good games at all?
A You'd have thought so – we're talking about one of the biggest toy companies in the world – but no, they haven't produced one single SNES game of merit. Proof indeed that money doesn't always talk.
Q What does ray-tracing mean? Does it even exist, as my friend keeps talking about it?
A It's the process where objects are modelled using a simulated light source. The 'rays' are 'traced' onto where they would naturally appear, and the object is depicted accordingly.
Q Will you be reviewing any Super Game Boy titles, as I own one, and your mag is so good I couldn't be bothered to swap to another one?
A I'd personally like to cover the more notable titles (like *Donkey Kong Land*) but again, it's up to you out there really.

PS Would it be worth starting up a "Give our PAL Ultra Full-screen Capability" petition to send to Nintendo UK?
A Sadly, I doubt Nintendo UK will be calling the shots regarding European machine standards. NOA and NCL will, between them, decide on its display capabilities etc. and they're the ones to badger about it (fruitlessly…).

From Admiral Graf, Somewheresville:
Q Is there any chance of a conversion of my favourite ever coin-op, *Rastan Saga*, appearing on the SNES? It had the coolest music ever.
A I agree, top music, very atmospheric. Little chance of a SNES conversion, though, unless Taito decide to 'do a *Space Invaders*'. Very unlikely.
Q What are your top ten favourite games ever?
A Hnngh! (adopts anime-style strained expression) – that is a toughie. Dunno, but the following games spring to mind and would appear, in some order or another: *Juno First* (coin-op – Konami), *Shinobi* (coin-op – Sega), *Out Run* (coin-op – Sega), *Wonderboy in Monster Land* (coin-op and Master System – Sega), *Zelda III* and *Utopia* (Intellivision – Mattel) Incidentally, I'd be interested to know your faves, so if you're going to write in, also include your own top tens (any system, any age), and even some justification, if you feel like it. I'll send some goodies to the most interesting ones.
Q What do you think is more important – graphics or gameplay?
A Neither, a perfect game is made up of parts that are all equally superlative. People make me laugh when they say that graphics aren't important – what a bloody load of rubbish. Imagine how much less fun *Zelda* or *Super Metroid* would be if you weren't dying to see what was around the corner – exploring *Zelda's Dark World*, for example, is delightful, as is marvelling at the gargantuan bosses in *Metroid*. Of course there are cases where graphics aren't as important – *Sensible Soccer*, for instance. But to say that gameplay is all there is to it is blinkered beyond belief. Anyway, that's enough about that.

From Simon Robinson, Doncaster, South Yorkshire:
Q When will the Satellaview system be released in Britain?
A It's not being released in Britain.
Q I want to buy *Chrono Trigger*, but is it harder than *Zelda*, and when will it be released in Britain?
A No UK release for at least a year I'd say, and it's hard to judge its difficulty against *Zelda*, they're very different.
Q In what order should I look to get these games: *Chrono Trigger, International Superstar Soccer, Megaman X2, Addams Family Values, Illusion Of Time, Pocky and Rocky 2, Super Punch Out!!*?
A My order would be *ISS, SPO!!, IOT, MMX2, AFV, P&R2*. But if you love ARPGs, get *IOT* first, er, PDQ, OK?

The Satellaview – not coming to a SNES near you. Unless you live somewhere other than Britain, that is. Never mind, eh?

ANY QUESTIONS?

No requests for game help and no anime questions, please. But send everything else to:

Gamefreak, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

DAYDREAMING

It would appear that plastic *FFIII* merchandise is a real lure – another postman-herniating sack of daydreams arrived this month. Tom Gilbert of Bishop's Stortford, Herts kicks off:

"How about a Transformers generation 1 RPG/shoot-'em-up/beat-'em-up? It would be an *Equinox*-style puzzle game but you could have action zones like in *Mystical Ninja* and transform whenever you like. You could control the Autobots, selecting from around four or five variants who each majored on intelligence, strength, stamina, speed, and so on."

Software Creations' 3D adventure *Equinox* – a likely basis for a game using Transformers characters?

Hmm. If I was controlling a whacking great Autobot I'd want to have a massive, sprawling landscape to power madly over, not be stuck in an *Equinox*-style environment. But Transformers still have loads of game potential (wonder what ever happened to that proposed Argonaut SFX license?) Next, it's that man Melville out of Exeter:

"My daydream would concern a remix of the old Konami game, *Pooyan*. It could feature Konami characters such as Goemon and Sparkster. Goemon could be in the basket with Dr Ying pulling him up and down. The baddies could be evil Sparksters. Bonus levels could be *Gradius*-like affairs, and you could also get the mole game from Goemon 1 replete with black and red Sparksters to hammer. Appearances from Hebereke, Bomberman and Puyo blobs would be sheer ecstasy, but alas, copyright laws would make it unlikely. Sob… But I live in hope that Konami's R&D team would make 'Konami Pooyan Family' (Copyright)."

Jesus, *Pooyan*'s getting on a bit, but it's just the sort of thing that Gamefreaks go for. But it's an update again and not a prize-winner. David King of Taunton, Somerset has an almost original idea:

"I've seen *The Firemen* and I wasn't impressed – it's got some nice ideas but it's terribly repetitive. My game would take the firefighting idea much further. You'd start out at your base and get called to various buildings (like the Town Hall, blocks of flats, a zoo etc – each one representing a level) and have to tackle them with a team of firemen, using hoses from long-range, and calling in helicopters and things to back you up. You could arm up members of your team with axes and send them in with oxygen supplies to rescue trapped people."

But the prize this month (lots of Japanese game-related clutter) goes to Kev James, of Swindon, Wiltshire. Well done:

"I want a shoot-'em-up with a totally customisable craft. Throughout each of the game's sections (there'll be horizontal and vertical bits) you can kill nasties and pick up bits of their ship which actually bolt on to yours. There'd also be shops where you could trade items (like in an RPG) and even a paint shop to allow you to pick your own colours and design logos. The downside of making your ship really weapon-crazy would be speed reduction and size, so you'd have to find a balance. Of course, there'd be loads of secret bolt ons to find and a way of combining weapons to create special effects."

***The Fireman* – a game that'd be much better with the addition of new locations, plus whole bunch of helicopters, hoses and axes. Or so reckons David King of Taunton.**

MODE 7

By DANNY WALLACE

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME-FREAKS!

"Yeah I know it's no fun, oh I know it's no fun, no I know it's no fun".

So sang Liam Gallagher of top indie band Oasis on their recent hit record "Whatever". Rumour has it the band were going through a rough, depressed stage at the time due to difficulties with their favourite SNES games. But, did they do what they should have done? Did they rush out, buy a copy of *Super Play* and turn to Mode 7, thus cheering themselves up and sorting out their games problems? No. They released more records, went on tour and made loads of money. The fools.

Don't be like Oasis, dear readers. Learn from their mistakes, and learn from the most comprehensive monthly tips section anywhere in whole wide world of video games.

This month, we've got loads of top stuff for you, including brand new tips for brand new games like the excellent *Mega Man X2*. Oh... and rumour has it, by the way, that Oasis did finally get their copy of *Super Play*, and that their next track starts off in a strange kind of homage to Mode 7: "Hurray hurray, it's a dan-dy day...".

No more strife with *Syndicate*.

SYNDICATE

(EA/Bullfrog)

***SP26:* 80%**

● **Passwords**

"Nemo" from Fife has sent in a few passwords for what he calls "the ludicrously simple *Syndicate*". So if, unlike him, you're having a bit of bother getting anywhere in this excellent Bullfrog affair, just enter the following codes for a bit of help.

MBBG79------TVLBV

This password will give you access to all Version 3 mods, plus all the weaponry, plus a wad of cash to the tune of 1,048,576, 16 agents and western Europe completed. Cor.

CBBBBBBBKG79---YWLSB

This gives you access to all Version 3 mods, all the weaponry, almost half a million quid, 8 agents, and all of east, west and central Europe completed, as well as Scandinavia.

DZB7D3545HB

This code'll give you 9,804,800 quid, all Version 3 mods, all the weaponry, 13 agents and just the Atlantic Accelerator left to complete.

Cheat a bit with these codes.

Freeze the enemy tanks and then see how they cope!

SPECTRE

(Gametek)

***SP21:* 90%**

● **Disable other tanks**

To play dirty on the UK version of *Spectre*, just play the game as normal, and at any time during the level, press button Y on controller 2. You should hear an explosion which will tell you that the cheat has worked. If you do hear that, then none of the other tanks on the level will be able to move or indeed fire, although some tanks in later levels will still be able to do some damage. Just make sure you press the Y button on controller 2 at the beginning of every level, OK? Thanks to Jason Garner, who lives at an extremely posh-sounding address in Paignton for that one.

DRAGON

(Virgin)

***SP21:* 88%**

● **Infinite Chi**

● **Level Select**

Steven Hughes from Kent has discovered quite a nifty little cheat to help keep you Kung Fu kickin' the night away.

Go to the sound test screen, and press B, A, R(ight button), B, A, R(ight button) and A. That 'spells' BARBARA, by the way, and will get you to a Level Select. Then go back to sound, and press Select, A, L(eft button), A, R(ight button), and Y (spelling SALARY) to get yer infinite chi. Bruce Lee went to my school, you know.

Who or what is Barbara and what can she do for you?

GAME GENIE CODES

Demon's Crest
D467-C703 First monster is now easier to kill
C93B-140F Infinite energy
DB67-C703 First monster is now harder to kill

BRUTAL

(Gametek)
***SP* Not reviewed**

● **Play as Dali Llama**
If, for some reason, you should find yourself actually wishing you could "play as that llama thing", just wander over to that title screen, take the first controller into your sweaty palm and press X, A, B, A, LEFT, A. You'll hear the sound of Phillip Schofield shooting a lizard if the cheat has worked. Now, start your game and choose a name. When choosing your character, look left of Kung Fu Bunny to find Dali Llama. Thank you, did you say? Why, that's quite alright, reader.

DANNY'S SPECIAL PLEA

Life is a funny old duchess. Walks in the park often turn to tragedy. Air is free – but is it? See how philosophical and deep I am? Send me your cart-related problems and I'll endeavour to free you from them, using special chants and a clever worm. Or something. Oh, but personal replies will not be sent, and any SAEs I get will have the stamp ripped off and used on a card to my gran. Probably. Still interested? Write to: Danny Dives In... (or any other vaguely amusing or rhyming name you can think of), *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

SUPER PUNCHOUT

(Nintendo)
***SP27:* 90%**

● **Sound Tezzzzt**
ARE YOU DULL? ARE YOU A DULL PERSON? Is your name Keith or Sarah? Do you have nothing to do of an evening? Your copy of *Super Punch-Out* hold too much excitement for you? Then why not... check out the sound test? I'm sure you'll already have looked for this handy and fun option, and found to your disappointment that it doesn't actually exist. Well, courtesy of Mode 7, it CAN exist. When the Nintendo logo appears, take controller two and press and hold the SELECT button. Then press and hold both the top L and R buttons and let go of SELECT. Before you can say "Blue Peter", a Sound Test will appear for your amusement. HAPPY NOW?

It's difficult to tell what *Super Punch-Out* sounds like from these screenshots...

...use our sound test options and you can listen to it to your heart's content.

CLAYFIGHTER 2: JUDGEMENT DAY

(Interplay)
***SP28:* 87%**

● **Secret characters**
● **Speed code**
Ask your Super Nintendo Entertainment System whether it would be alright to quickly have a look at the Menu Screen of this game. Once there, simply carry out the following codes to play as some secret characters.
JACK: Hold UP, and press X, A, R, R, Y, A.
DR. PEELGOOD: Hold DOWN/LEFT, and then press B, Y, Y, A, Y.
Now then, the speed code. Play in a tournament game. When the computer is fighting against the computer you'll notice it's probably beating you quite badly. Yes? That'll be because it's going STUPIDLY fast. In the middle of this fight, press RESET. When you start the game again, it'll be your turn to be going fast (speed 10, in fact).

DON'T ASK ALLAN

INVALUABLE MONTHLY GAMING ADVICE

The Tipster King is dead! Well... pensioned off and living in a small tree in Bromley, anyway. He was actually a 48 year old called Benson, y'know. True. He'd never even seen a SNES. He was just getting all the tips from the colourful voices in his head. Never mind, eh? So then, a new tips corner calls for a new tips corner name and a *Super Play* pen goes to whoever comes up with a better name than "Danny Dives In..." (Alison's attempt at alliteration). But, till then, I, Danny, will be doing my bestest to solve the SNES problems of *Super Play* readers all over the world. I'm not infallible, but I do know more than, say, TV's Gloria Hunniford, so give me a try. Oh... just don't call me "Allan", eh? Bye.

DEAR DANNY:
Could you please tell me how to get my opponents into the "Dead Pool" when playing *MK2*. Thank you.
Scott Murray, Glasgow

DANNY SAYS LOUDLY:
My, what a polite young man you are. I like you. You're good. Anyhows, here's how to pull off what is widely known as the "Hello, Sir!", and is one of the most satisfying moves to pull off on a human opponent, as it usually makes them cry. When you're on the Dead Pool stage, and you see the "Finish Him/Her" message, hold LOW KICK and LOW PUNCH, then crouch and hit HIGH PUNCH for a standard uppercut. OK?

DEAR DANNY:
What are these odd hairs doing under my arms? My friend said it is puberty and that it is quite normal. Can you help me?
Ian Fletcher, Hull

DANNY SAYS QUIETLY:
No-one can help you, Ian. YOU ARE A FREAK. Hide your tortured, sick mind away in a cupboard and plague us no more.

DEAR DANNY:
I am a big fan of *Mortal Kombat 2* and I've heard rumours that there is a move where you can hit your opponents up onto some spikes. Can you please tell me how to do this move?
Manalita Boswell, Newry, Co. Down

DANNY SAYS HAPPILY:
Right then, another one of those *MK2* questions. What you do is make sure that when the "Finish Him/Her" message appears on the Warrior's Tomb stage, make sure you are really close to your opponent.

Then do the same as you would on the Dead Pool stage. The enemy should fly up onto the spikes just like you want them to, you sick child.

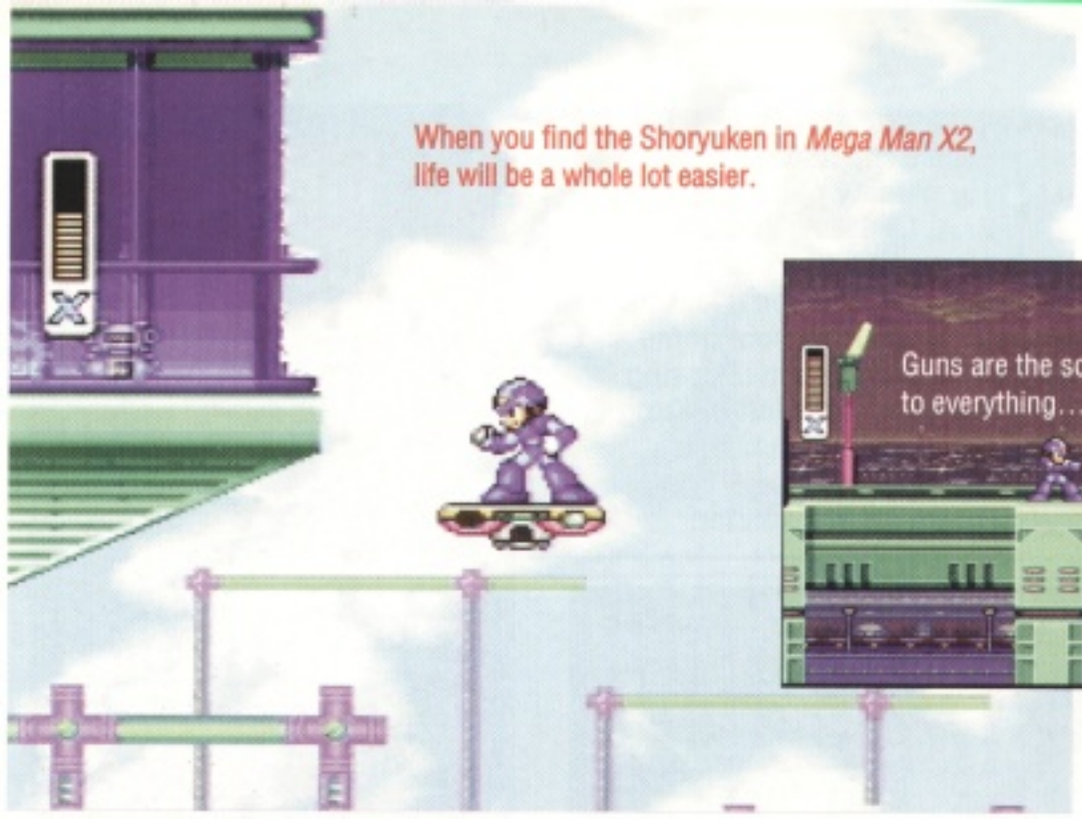
Oh, and if you'd like to send them hurtling down to the depths of the Pit 2, just carry out the same move.

DEAR DANNY:
I can get up to the two jaguars on *Pitfall* but I always end up getting killed by the second one. How do I beat them?
Wing-Jo Cheung, Leicester

DANNY SAYS CONFIDENTLY:
Ah... "Zakelua's Twin Stone Jaguars", eh? Use your boomerangs on the first jaguar, right? When the second arrives, use your sling shot. When they both come at you at once, stay in the middle of the screen and keep jumping as they run towards you.

When one jaguar goes off for a rest, shoot as many sling shots as you can at the remaining one.

Use the exploding stones things, and you should be able to finish him off before his mate gets back. Then just repeat what you did in the first level.



When you find the Shoryuken in *Mega Man X2*, life will be a whole lot easier.

MEGA MAN X2

(Capcom)

***SP30:* 80%**

● How to get the Shoryuken

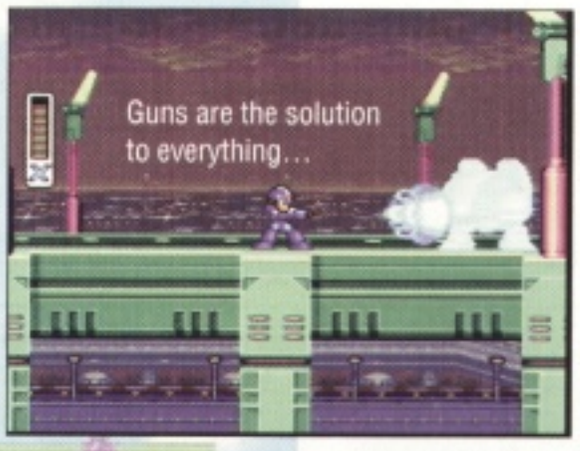
Having trouble with this rather top little game. Come, gentle reader, as I take you by the finger (rather like your mother would) and show you how to get everything you'll need to complete the game – including the special hidden weapon, the Shoryuken. First of all, get to the Password Option screen and enter this code:

7366
7123
6188
3681

This will give you all weapons, parts for Zero and the four sub-tanks. You'll start your little adventure from just before you enter the first X-Hunter Stage. You should really power up your sub-Tanks before you do anything else. Go back to the Desert Base Stage (which you've already beaten), and get to the place where you have to ride your cycle up the first hill. Once at the top of the hill, turn the cycle around and then jump up on the large platform to your left. With me so far? Once you're there, you'll see a chunk of rock that has a darker section visible – sort of like a path. Using your S. Wheel weapon, cut through the path. Once through, change your weapon to Silk.

Keep your weapon button held down, and – as if by magic – energy capsules will appear from nowhere. Do this as many times as you want. I don't mind, honest.

When you've got enough, press pause and go to EXIT. You are now about to begin the first stage of X-Hunter. Get through the first two X-Hunter stages. Now, at the third stage, find the point where there are two ladders (one going up, one going down). At this point, run to the left. When you see that bat thing, run back to the right and use your Crystal H. weapon to freeze it directly below the upper ladder. Jump onto the frozen bat and use it to get from the wall to the ladder. Run up the ladder, feeling rather pleased with yourself, and get an extra life. Then travel right. You should now be faced with a set of spikes blocking your path. Choose the S. Burner weapon and hold the button down to charge it up. Drop down the ledge. Before you hit the spikes, do your special air-dash move and then let go of the button (this'll make you dash even further, and so you should land safely). Shoot the enemies, laughing evilly as you do so. You know that area that has spikes on the ceiling, as well as spikes on the floor? Just do your dash-thing after a small jump in order to fly straight through them. Right then, we're almost finished. Next, jump onto the small platform right before another set of spikes and a huge great wall of spikes. Concentrate. Charge up your S Burner weapon. Jump up and burn above the spikes (don't hit the wall, though), and fall. Before you hit the spikes below, Air Dash to the left. Pick up the extra life down below. Jump down and slide against the wall on the left. While sliding, keep pushing left and you'll come to a hidden opening in the wall. Go through and you'll meet nice Dr. Light, who'll direct you to the machine. Get in it, and you'll get the Shoryuken. To use it, carry out the same set of moves used for pulling off a *SF2* Dragon Punch (Right, Down, Down/Right, Fire). Not bad, eh?



X-MEN: MUTANT APOCALYPSE

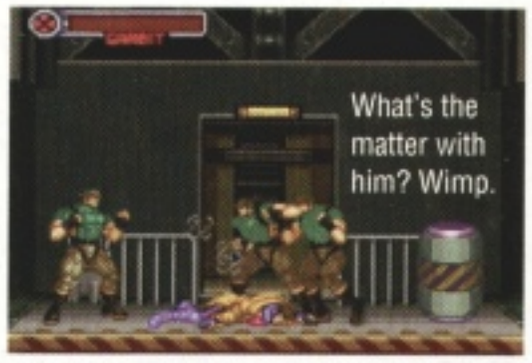
(Capcom)

***SP29:* 52%**

● Level passwords

OK, so it's not an official UK release, but as there are bound to be loads of you out there who've got this on import, you can roll about on your carpet getting your jollies from our just-in passwords...

Hivebrood's Deserted Camp:
Xavier, Magneto, Gambit, Cyclops, Apocalypse, Gambit, Magneto, Magneto



Genoshan Prison:
Gambit, Beast, Magneto, Cyclops, Cyclops, Gambit, Magneto, Apocalypse

Apocalypse's Base:
Beast, Gambit, Beast, Wolverine, Magneto, Beast, Cyclops, Wolverine

Danger Room (Omega Red):
Psylocke, Wolverine, Wolverine, Gambit, Wolverine, Beast, Psylocke, Cyclops

Avalon:
Beast, Gambit, Gambit, Wolverine, Magneto, Magneto, Xavier, Gambit

Aren't we kind to you?

MOST WANTED TIPS

Once again we've arrived at the section where we, your nice friends at *Super Play* magazine, ask you in a very polite voice to use your SNES, your mind and your clever reader-ways to craftily uncover the tips we want to have...

CLAYFIGHTER 2: JUDGEMENT CLAY
Oh yes, by just casting your eyes somewhere along one of these cleverly laid-out Mode 7 pages, you'll discover how to 'be' two secret characters. Can you find any others? Eh? Can you? Eh?

RISE OF THE ROBOTS
Can anyone find any cheats which'll make *Rise of the Robots* even faintly bearable? A bearability cheat, perhaps? Or anything...?

Mark your envelope: *ROTR* can be fun. And we'll laugh cynically.

SIDE POCKET
Remember this? We love it. Anyway, the trick shot section is certainly fun and does add quite a bit to the game, but can anyone find a way of making sure you finish each one? Some sort of mini level-skip? Dig it out and have a try.

Send any of your top cheats in to Danny and you may win something.

POWER DRIVE

(US GOLD)
***SP28:* 69%**

● **Passwords**
I have to admit I'm not a particular fan of this one, but Stephen and Philip Rowland must be. They've spent many happy hours playing the game and coming up with cow-loads of passwords to help you get through it quicker.
To start on round 6 with a choice of a Ford Cosworth or Toyota Cilica-type car, type:
4W5PPC49KQ26CQ2F
To start in Australia with a Cosworth:
L80V--P-04JX-JNK
To start on round 8 (Great Britain) with a Cosworth:
LM0KJQQ2HSDBWDTY
Begin on round 9 in Great Britain with a Cosworth, enter:
CRHXHHTLJT3-80PR
To begin on round 9 with a Toyota and over $100,000, type:
KSTHXNMZ3HLYVR0Y

Whizz through the lovely *Power Drive* even more quickly than usual with the use of passwords. Especially useful if you're a bit useless, like Danny is.

TURN AND BURN

(Absolute)
***SP20:* 71%**

● **Level codes**
Having trouble turning while you're burning? A common complaint, that one. Lucky then, that we've got readers like James Firon in Bradford to help out. The codes can be used on both novice and ace skill levels, by the by.

2	NQBJKLFF
3	GSZWBFPT
4	RRHCZJVM
5	BPYXDLNF
6	LFMGWTKQ
7	PDTBCZNJ
8	DKVWGSQK
9	GKQZBLCT
10	DCMHRPFJ
11	WZGNJYZX
12	JDZFMLFV
13	SPBCTRRG
14	SPWVJKDH
15	LPKQBPFZ
16	TDLJGSHX

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Super Punchout
7E089F50 Infinite energy
7E0B2800 Infinite time

Power Rangers
7E04C070 Infinite energy
7E04F202 Infinite lives

Pinball Dreams
7E006EFF Ball acts like a madman (Activate cheat by pressing 'tilt' and switch the AR on when on the parameter screen)
7E001EFF Background FX

International Superstar Soccer
7E177400 Opposition goals don't count
7E1A4655 Infinite time

Cannon Fodder
7E15C603 Infinite Grenades
7E05AB0F Leader becomes general

Kick Off 3
7E0A4100 Player 1's goals don't count
7E0A4300 Player 2's goals count not
7E0F2E01 After an own goal, the player will celebrate normally
7E0A3B00 After you've scored, you still have kick off

Gary Bates, Stuart Charlesworth, Daniel Thornton, Darren Mills and Robert Johnson are gods of the Action Replay and should receive the thanks of the nation for their hard work and good looks.

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER

(Konami)
***SP30:* 92%**

● **Play against a secret team**
Yeah, we know there was a similar cheat two issues back, but this is a new way of getting you, Johnny Gamesplayer, to play against a super team made up of all the best international players. Sadly, however, you're going to have to take them on as Columbia, because Neil Armstrong, who sent the password in, hasn't found a way of being anyone else yet. Can anyone help us out? Anyway, thanks to Neil and here's the password:
:2KR!L YM2WG T-BFQ -BFQ- BFQ-BFQ-BFQ-BFG

Another way to beat the opposition into submission in Konami's top footy game.

SUPER RETURN OF THE JEDI

(JVC)
***SP30:* 79%**

● **Infinite detonators**
● **Clear the stage**
On the title screen, press A, A, B, B, X, X, Y, Y, A, B, X, Y, A, B, X, Y. You'll hear a voice if you've managed that properly. On side-scrolling levels, choose any character and have infinite detonators. Holding B and pressing START will clear the stage for you. Short and sweet.

Speed your way with no dismay with these handy level codes.

SHAQ FU

(EA)
***SP* N/A**

● **Blood code**
Apart from having perhaps the most annoying storyline of any game ever made (basketball star visits shop, opens door, finds himself in another dimension, decides to fight everyone), *Shaq Fu* also has a Kombat-esque Blood Code. At the options screen, quickly press Y, X, B, A, L, R. The screen will flash red to confirm that the cheat has worked. Huzzah.

Those legal funsters who decide to censor what you can and can't see on your SNES won't be too pleased with this. But never mind, *Super Play* is here to reveal all.

THE FINAL CURTAIN

Do you have a tip so hot that just writing it down burns a hole in the paper? Probably not, because that'd be scientifically impossible and a bit silly. Unless you had a really hot pen or something. And anyway, what good would it be to me getting letters that just have a huge great hole in them? None, I can tell you. I'd be very annoyed. But you get the drift. Send your tips (non-flammable only) to:
Mode 7, Super Play, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.
Who wrote that first sentence anyway?

FREE ADS

If you want to get more for less, then feast your eyes on the selection of bargains to be picked up in *Super Play*'s Super Market this month...

SUPER MARKET

GAMES FOR SALE

● I am selling seven SNES games all UK, including SF2 Turbo and Tuff E Nuff. Please ring 4 to 6pm – Tel (0181) 5505128.

● US SNES games for sale: NHL '93, Bulls vs Blazers, Bubsy, Zombies, Star Fox, Battletoads, Prince of Persia, Street Fighter II, Alien 3, £10-£15 each. Tel (0181) 3848690.

● For sale: Street Fighter II (£15), Super Star Wars (£15), Zelda III (£15) or will swap for: Super Mario Kart, Street Racer or Stunt Race FX. Ask for James (01342) 7135255.

● SNES games (Colchester) – World Cup Striker £20, Smash Tennis £20, Actraiser 2 (USA) £20, R-Type £12, Batman Returns (USA) £15, NHL '94 £15. Tel (01255) 870330.

● DK Cty £30, FIFA £20, Street Racer £25, Zombies £20, NHL 95 £25, Sim City £15, Kick Off 3 Euro Challenge £20, all as new. Tel Steve on (0114) 2331777 Sheffield area.

● SNES games for sale. Low prices and games in excellent condition (like new) boxed with instructions. Games include SFII Turbo & MKII. Call (01782) 305125 for prices.

● SNES games: Robotrek (US), Demon's Crest (US), £25 each. Mystical Ninja (US) £17. P&P inc. Tel (01379) 740367 after 6pm.

● NES games: Gauntlet 2, Solar Jetman, Double Dragon 2 & 3, Mega Man 3, North & South, Gremlins 2, Burai Fighter, £10 – £15. Also Game Genie & universal adaptor. Tel (01584) 811579 and ask for Sam.

● For sale: Mario Allstars £20, Batman Returns £17, Mystical Ninja £17, Scavenger Hunt £15, Ghouls & Ghosts £10, John Madden '93 £10, Pitfighter (no box or instructions) £3. Phone (01642) 584821. Offers/swaps considered.

● Cheap SNES games (all UK), Wrestlemania £5, Mario World £5, Probotector £11, Alien 3 £11, Starwing £12, Cool Spot £12, Mario Collection £15, Turtles Tournament £15. All for only £60. Ask for Tim on (01684) 592269.

● Game Boy games for sale, some new, some old, in good nick. No money, I'll swap you a game for a game. (0181) 803 3941.

● I want to sell Aladdin (UK) and Starwing (UK) for £20 each or both for £35. Tel (01953) 602354.

● SNES games sell/swap. Streetfighter Turbo (US) £20, F Zero (no box) £15, Mortal Kombat 2 £35, Street Racer £30, Kick Off 3 £30. Call (0181) 946 6746. Collect only.

● For sale: Lion King (£20), SF2 Turbo (£20), Cybernator (£20). All UK. Call Neil after 4pm: (0181) 5140452.

● For sale: £20 – Zelda, Super Bomberman, Super SWN, Super Smash TV, Alien 3, Equinox, Super Probotector, Wrestlemania, Tiny Toons, MK 1, Rival Turf, Super Strike Gunner. (0181) 789 9189.

● Secret of Mana (US) box & instructions £25, Space Megaforce (US) boxed £15, SN programmable joystick (UK, works on any SNES) box & instructions, hardly used, £20. Ring Tom on (0114) 2305130.

● Hi Gamesters – I've got a great offer for you, 50 SNES Sega and PC mags and a few books for only £50 ono. (01564) 773295.

● UK games for sale include Street Racer £25 NBA Jam TE £30, Slam Masters (USA) £30, SFII Turbo £20, Batman £20, Flashback £10, Mortal Kombat £12. Call (01476) 593019.

● UK SNES games for sale: FIFA £27, Super Castlevania IV £17, Populous £20. All boxed with instructions as new. Phone Andy: (01604) 402576.

● EW Jim (UK) £32 Super SF2 & Convertor £40, Stunt Race FX (UK) £30, Super Metroid £25, NHL 94 £22, World Cup USA £20. Tel (0115) 790522.

● Megaman X £25, Metal Marines £25, WWF Royal Rumble (US) and adaptor £30, Magic Sword £15. Tel: (01861) 526611.

● For sale: SNES games: Probotector (UK) £25, SFII £10 (UK), Mario Allstar (UK) £28. Contact Tom 6pm – 10pm weekdays (01279) 503765.

● Sell: Secret of Mana (US) £30, Breath of Fire (US) £30, Boxing Legends of the Ring (UK) £25, Flashback (UK) £18 or swap for SSFII or any good game. Must live in Lothian or pay half of postage. (01501) 762891.

● SNES games for sale including SFII Turbo, MK II, Starwing, USA '94, Desert Strike & Mario. Call (01782) 305124.

SWAP

● Have you got Mario Kart or Exhaust Heat 2? If so, I'll exchange it for Bomberman or Pilotwings. (0121) 773 3102.

● Will swap my boxed CDI & eight games for a Neo Geo CD & two games. Phone Scott on 01522 530228.

● Swap my SNES with eight games plus Game Genie convertor for a Neo Geo or Neo CD with two games – one must be Samurai Showdown. Ring (01945) 881465 and ask for Chris.

● Swap my Kick Off 3 for Stunt Race FX, GP1, F1 Pole Position or SFII Turbo. Call James on tel (01438) 369827.

● I'll swap my Road Riot 4WD, Mystic Quest Legend, Zool, Troddlers or Powermonger for Sim City, Megalomania, Final Fantasy III or Secret of Mana or sell for £20 each.

● Swap your Super Puyo Puyo (Jap) for my Donkey Kong Country (US). Tel Ben on (0114) 2341128.

● I will swap my Plok (UK) plus £8 for your Secret of Mana (might swap Return of the Jedi). Ring Amer on (0141) 339 4007. Must collect.

● Swaps! All UK MKI, SFII, and F-Zero or Super Tennis. Wanted SNES UK version of Super Return of the Jedi. Phone: (01865) 245123 after 7pm and ask for Flat 79.

● I'll swap Mario is Missing and the Incredible Hulk for Rainbowbell Adventures, Breath of Fire or Secret of Mana (UK version). Thank you! (01703) 321699

● Swap your Super Mario World (US) for my SFII Turbo (US). Tel Ben on (0114) 2341128.

● Swap – I will swap any of my games: Super Off Road, PGA Golf, Flashback, Batman Returns, Striker or Jimmy C's Tennis + £5 for Donkey Kong Country. (Only in West Yorkshire area.) Tel (01924) 453855.

● I will swap: Lost Vikings, Mario Kart, Madden '93, Turtles, Tournament Fighters or Chaos Engine for Chrono Trigger, FFIII, Illusion of Gaia or any other RPGs. (0161) 9629804

● Swap my Battletoads in Battlemaniacs for Turtles IV: Turtles in Time or Joe and Mac. My game is UK. (01505) 685167 week days after 4pm. Ask for Richie.

● I will swap my Master System Desert Strike and Chaos Engine on Mega Drive for Shining Force on Mega Drive. Tel (01242) 233804 after 6pm, ask for Alex.

● I will swap my UK Jaguar with Doom and Cybermorph for your UK 3DO with 1 or 2 games in good condition. Tel Tim on (01253) 878143 after 4pm.

● Swap my Axelay (UK) for your Castlevania IV (UK). Must be boxed with instructions. You must collect. (01708) 867652

● SNES Street Fighter Two Turbo. Wanted, any game for SNES. Ask for David after 4pm. (01302) 721081

● Swap my MK II, Sim City, Starwing for your SSFII, three games for one! Phone (01784) 246735 ask for Danny, London area only.

● Swap Mana, FFIII, Wing Com (all US) for Illusion of Gaia, Soulblazer, Lufia, Populous 2, Powermonger, Paladin's Quest. One for one. Phone (0181) 3145770, ask for Andy.

● Your: Soulblazer, Ramparts, Equinox, Ys III, Paladin's Quest, BOF, FF: Mystic Quest UK or US, for my Super Probotector (UK), SFII (UK), Mario Allstars (UK). Phone Tom (01279) 503765 6pm 10pm weekdays.

● NBA Jam (US), Zombies (UK), TMNT Tournament (US), Bomberman (UK) and more to swap for FFII, Mario Kart and SRFX. (0181) 521 9160.

● CD32, James Pond 3, Microcosm, Impossible Mission 2025. £150 ono. Will swap for 16 Mbit copier. (0161) 755 3242

MESSAGES AND EVENTS

● Do you like Aliens? Star Trek? Terminator? Doctor Who? Do you like reading Terry Pratchett, Douglas Adams, or Clive Barker? Looking forward to Judge Dredd, Batman Forever and (possibly) Waterworld? Then you want SFX, the new science fiction and fantasy magazine from Future Publishing (the people behind this very mag, so you know it'll be good). We cover film, TV, books, video, comics, toys & models and more – and all in full colour, on top quality paper. That's SFX magazine, first issue on sale May 23rd. Don't miss it!

● About 45 mags for sale inc Mean Machines Sega 1-11, Megatech 9-13, CVG, Sega power etc. £40 or with swap for a good SNES or 3DO game. Tel Ells on (01223) 355068

● I'm a 12 year old lad looking for a pen-pal anywhere in the UK. Any age, any sex. I love Star Trek and SNES. I'll reply to all letters! Sean Wallace, 15 Grasmere St, Liverpool L5 6RH.

● 17-year old Australian male who is into SNES games, films and anime seeks penpals from everywhere, esp. Japan and America. Please write to: Quintin Graham, 3 Corney Street, North Mackay, Queensland, Australia 4740.

● Over £300 worth of mags for sale. NMS, Edge, C&VG, Gamefan, EGM, Total etc, many first issues. Sell for £100 ono. Buyer must collect. Tel (01924) 430248 between 4pm -10pm. Ask for Matthew.

● Free! Only joking. Anybody who wants to join a Play-by-mail basketball league ring (0113) 2486661 for info from Jack after 4pm.

● Magazines! Super Play 1-30, supplements and SP Gold, NMS 1-31, GO! 1-24, Ultimate Future Games 1, 2 & 3. All good to perfect condition. Offers to Tom on (0114) 2305130. May swap.

● Super Play issues 4-30 plus Gold for sale. Worth £67 so will sell for £30 ono. You must be able to collect or pay for postage. (01896) 756235

● Manga and anime for sale, phone Derek on (0141) 6393783. Plus penpals wanted, must be interested in anime.

● Issues 2-9 of Control with issues 1-7 of Super Control. Other SNES mags for sale as well. Everything in mint condition. Make me an offer! (01772) 725185

● Nintendo magazine system issues 1 to 30, £40. Plus issues 11, 13, 14, 15, 17 & 24 of original Mean Machine for sale. Consider offers. Will sell separately. (01236) 424483

● Manga videos for sale. Cyber City OEDO 808 Nos 1, 2 and 3 brand new, still sealed. Will sell for £8 each ono, or swap for SNES or Game Boy games.

WANTED

● Final Fantasy III (US) for £35, Soul Blazer (US) for £25 and a Pro Universal adaptor for £5. All with boxes and instructions. For more info on any of the above, please call Kim Bissix on 0117 9608595.

● Any RPGs except Zelda 3, Final Fantasy or Equinox. Will buy or swap for Streetracer, Equinox, Pop 'n Twinbee and many more. Phone after 5pm ask for Nigel. (01274) 599819

● Famicom racing games wanted especially F1 Grand Prix II, Super F1 hero, Exhaust Heat II and F1 Circus. Other racing games also considered. Will swap or buy. Tel Phil on (0630) 655189.

● Second-hand Secret of Mana or Breath of Fire or Legend of the Mystical Ninja or Super Metroid or Turtles Tournament Fighter for Super Play issues 1-27 and Bart's Nightmare (US). Thanks! (01868) 759622

● SNES games wanted. Top titles only. Cash waiting (01463) 221173

● Wanted – Aladdin, with instructions. Will pay £20 plus. (01366) 388399

● Wanted – Star Wars for Game Boy & Super Back to the Future 2 for SNES, must be boxed plus instructions, except Jap games. Tel: (01384) 397411 and ask for Brett.

● Wanted – Dragon Ball Z will pay £20, or DBZ 2 for £25, or DBZ 3 for £30. Also Dragon Ball Z (RPG) for £15. Watford area only. Ask for Karkay. (01923) 253756

● Wanted pen pal aged 12-13, boy or girl. Must like computers drawing and anime (or manga). (01228) 37208

● Wanted (US) Starfox, (US) Stunt Race FX and (US) Vortex. No box or instructions needed. Tel (01405) 762278

● Oy! Have you got Secret of Mana that you are willing to sell or swap? If so, then I'm the one you should talk to (all UK). Call Andrew on (01706) 370992. Ta!

● Wanted – m/f pen pal into computers & manga 12-15 only. Write to: Alison Wilkes, Woldingham School, Surrey CR3 7YA.

● I want Final Fantasy II. I will pay from £20 – £30. Phone (0181) 9044845 and ask for Scott.

● Wanted: FFII, BOF, Secret of Mana, Illusion of Gaia, all US please, will pay up to £35 for each. Phone (01709) 367914.

● Wanted, your Super Punch Out (US). I'll give you £30 for it. Tel Ben on (0114) 2341128

● Wanted: Zelda I & II for the NES. Phone Tom (01279) 503765 6pm – 10pm weekdays

● Wanted: Lethal Enforcers (US version) with light gun, Glasgow area preferred. Tel: Adam on (01698) 286789

HARDWARE FOR SALE

● UK SNES, Multitap, adaptor, Super Game Boy, Scope and 22 top games. Game Boy and 12 games £700. Tel: Ross (01472) 343554

● SNES American Scart version with 14 top games inc SSFII and three joy pads. £220. Ring Chris on (0161) 485 5366.

● Neo Geo & two games – Burning Fight and Soccer Brawl. £230 (Scart) (two joysticks). Tel (0181) 393 5892.

● UK SNES with seven games inc Stunt Race FX £195. Buyer must collect – Bradford area. Tel (01274) 371783.

● NES, light gun & 9 games, 1 without instructions, all boxed in good nick £100. Ring Norm on (01225) 331007.

● UK SNES with five controllers, Super 5 multi 5 player, 12 top games, Donkey Kong Country, Stunt Race, Street Racer, Dragon Ball 1, 2 & 3, etc, and universal adaptor. Only £350, call Clement before 11.00 am: (0181) 8949331.

● UK SNES – 2 joypads, Donkey Kong Country, Lion King, MKII, Turtles, Rock & Roll Racing, Starwing and scart lead, all for £250 ono.

● UK SNES with four games including Secret of Mana and Shadowrun plus adaptor. £100. Will separate. Tel: (0121) 7775270.

● Mega Drive for sale (Jap) 50-60hz, 2 joypads & 10 games: Road Rash 1 & 2, Dizzy, Dune II, Jungle Strike, Herzog Zwei, Warsong, Landstalker, Sonic 2. £190. Call after 6pm (0181) 6778758.

● UK SNES, 24 games, 3 pads, 2 joysticks, Multi-tap, Super Game Boy and 4 games, Super Play issues 12 to 31. Worth over £1,500. Will sell for £600. All boxed, good condition. Tel: Kevin Mitchell on (01346) 532185

● Game Boy, including 6 games – Tetris, Mortal Kombat, Mario Land II, Kung Fu Master, Prince Valiant and Tiny Toons. Sell for £55. (0141) 633 3261.

● UK SNES for sale, 12 games, 2 joypads, universal adaptor, carry case, loads of mags, will sell games separately. Worth over £500, sell for £250. Buyer must collect. (0141) 9591177.

● Atari Jaguar for sale with Cybermorph game. Brand new & unused. £100. Tel: (01706) 813950, ask for Andy.

● Atari Lynx boxed, good condition – 5 games and power pack & instructions. £60. (0181) 306 0429, ask for Doug.

● Mega CD 1 and Mega Drive 1 with two Mega Drive games and 15 Mega CD, all for £300, or will swap for Atari Jag UK. (01703) 610155.

● Neo-Geo, two joysticks & memory card £120. Samurai Showdown £85, King of Fighters '94 £100, Super Sidekicks £50, Top Player Golf £50, League Bowling £50. Call Abbey (0171) 250 4161.

● Mega Drive with six games inc FIFA '95, Mortal Kombat & NBA Jam & 2 joypads & mags. Will sell separately or swap for SNES games. For more info call: 01254 386192 – £120 ono.

● SNES & 14 games. Mega Drive & eight games. Master system & three games. Game Boy & five games, plus extras. £400 ono. Phone (0181) 303 0373.

SNES for sale, boxed, mint condition, five games, two pads, universal adaptor, 10 issues of Super Play – £210 ono. Call (01947) 605 261.

● UK SNES inc two joypads, Super Scope & 8 games, Mario Kart, Contra 3, Streetfighter 2 Turbo, Rock 'n' Roll Racing, World Cup Striker, Starwing, Pilotwings & US/Jap adaptor, all boxed. Price £150 ono. Tel (01734) 792572.

● SNES!! with nine games inc DKC and Stunt Race FX £250. Buyer must collect, Bradford area. Tel (01274) 371783, mags also.

● UK SNES, 6 months old with Mario Allstars, Super Morph, Super Tennis, Jurassic Park, Starwing Pilot, Stunt Race FX, Claymates & Zelda III. Games & SNES in immac. condition. If you want a bargain, hurry up! Only £125. Phone Mon & Tues only between 3pm- 5pm, Glasgow area. (01505) 335644.

● UK SNES with ten games, Donkey Kong, Alien 3, Streetfighter 2, Super Mario Kart & World, Zelda, Super Soccer, Ghosts & Ghouls, Gods, Dungeon Master. £200. Tel (0181) 204 9433 – NW London.

● UK SNES with 25 games inc MK II, Super SF2, DK Cty & lots of accessories worth well over £1000. Will sell for bargain at £350, ring Dave on (01892) 783182.

● 32X plus Virtua Racing Deluxe & Star Wars & Mega Drive & Sonic. The lot for £150, dirt cheap! Call Rob on (0181) 954 4686. May split.

● UK SNES and nine games for sale, good cond. Games include Donkey Kong, Stuntrace FX, Megaman, all fully boxed, worth £400 new, sell for £250 ono. Ring (0373) 465107 (after six).

● NES for sale with five games – £60. Will sell games (Mario 3, Castlevania 2, Ducktales, Life Force, Tetris) separately £10-£15 each. Also swap Castlevania 4 for Mystical Ninja (UK). Phone Roland: (01666) 824401.

● Mega Drive and nine games all boxed. £200, will take offers. (01344) 842292.

● CDI 210, boxed, excellent condition & four games including Zelda, Voyeur and Crompton's Encyclopedia, worth over £700. Will sell for £350 ono. Phone Paddy on (01384) 830266.

● Turbo Duo CD Rom 2 for sale & eight games. £200 ono. (01484) 664016.

● UK SNES with SSFII, SFII Turbo, MK II, Stunt Race FX, Mario All Stars, Super Tennis, Pilot Wings, Top Gear, Lemmings, Action Replay 2, multi tap, arcade stick, converter, three pads, AV cable, carry case. All boxed, worth £620. Sell for only £300. Will split. (01208) 78296.

● SNES for sale. Four great games inc Mario Kart, MK II, Flashback SFII Turbo and Scope, one control pad (not boxed) £200. Ask for Baz (01525) 872380.

● Game Boy for sale with 16 games. Worth at least £300 new – only £130 including postage & batteries! Phone David on (0171) 8361160 daytime.

● Game gear for sale, with super wide screen, 4 in 1 cart, four top games, AC adaptor, all boxed, excellent condition. £100 ono. Tel (01229) 832857 after 6 pm.

● UK SNES for sale Donkey Kong Country pack for £110. Unwanted present, never been used. Cash only. (0956) 248258.

● SNES US Scart with two pads and Starfox, Shadow Run & Smash TV. All leads etc £130. Nick Harlow (01279) 865896.

● American SNES for sale, seven top games – NBA Jam etc, two controllers, all leads for Scart, fully boxed, very good condition £200. Phone (01469) 573082 after 6 pm.

● UK SNES & 10 games inc Mario Kart, Allstars & Equinox. Eight packs, one joystick, only 1 year old. All games boxed & instructions. All for £200 or individually. Phone after 4 pm (01895) 859004.

● Super Nintendo (UK) Metroid, MK II, Stunt Race FX, Super SF2, Samurai Showdown, Earthworm Jim. £250 ono. (0161) 755 3242.

● For sale: SNES, two pads, Quickjoy autofire joystick, converter, MK II, SFII Turbo, Starwing, Desert Strike, WA '94, Mario IV for £180. Will separate. Call (01782) 305124.

● A UK SNES plus pads, joystick, converter and six games including MK II for £180 over £80 less than new. All items mint condition with instructions & boxes (will separate). Call (01782) 305124.

● SNES & two pads & quickjoy joystick & converter & six games including Mortal Kombat II for sale. Cost £250, will sell for £180. Will separate! Call (01782) 305124.

FANZINES

● Super NES Fanzine for sale. Also SNES games for sale or swap. Contact Malcolm on (01463) 711205.

● 'Phantasy Realm' all console RPG fanzine, £1.50. Wanted reviews, artwork etc. Contact A. Simpson (0121) 604 7524.

● Console Massive is here containing 15 Game Boy reviews, cheats for the SNES, six main reviews and games for sale! All this for just 75p. Phone Ian on (0181) 8901632 for details.

● GB Magic is one of the classiest mags around. Issue 9 has the alternative Brit awards, lots of cheats, reviews, news, music. It's not all Game Boy so there's loads for all and it's only 50p! GB Magic, 27 Burnside, Haddington, E Lothian, Scotland, EA41 4ER.

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EXCITABLE VIEWPOINT
PLAY BACK

For three whole pages we turn the limelight on you lot, printing the best of your letters, answering your questions, and offering round tea and biscuits. Okay, so the tea and biccies might be stretching it a bit. But two out of three isn't bad....

'TECH-SPEC OBLIVION'

Well, very exciting times we live in.

I remember when the Mega Drive was an exciting development, cutting edge technology. Then a company called Nintendo released the SNES and totally blew Sega into tech-spec oblivion. Now we see these events repeating.

Don't underestimate Nintendo, all you Doubting Thomases. Let Sega release as many systems as they want. This is just the beginning of another race for market domination. Let's face it, Nintendo aren't a bunch of jerks. Anyone can see they are just biding their time, watching the other side of the fence, until the time is right to unleash the Ultra 64.

All we have to do is resist the temptations of Saturn & Playstation till next year (the Playstation being the most attractive in my opinion). Remember Mega Drive / SNES, and all good things to those who wait.

Mr D Allport, Rotherham

We were heartened by Miyamoto's sentiment in our interview last month when he wondered if the SNES wasn't still enough for today's players. Bearing in mind that it's taken almost half a decade for developers like Square and Rare to show what can be done with 16-bit hardware, we can't help but wonder just how many years it will be before 32-bit and 64-bit technology is properly exploited.

Now watch out for this man Allport later in Playback.

'THE IMAGE OF MUTTLEY'

I only have a few questions, so bear with me:

1) What kind of a computer was the Spectrum? I've never heard of it, so maybe it was just a British thing.

2) Look in issue 28, page 27. Now look at the middle left photo. To the right of the keyboard is a box of blank floppies that seems to have the image of 'Muttley' from Hanna Barbara cartoons like 'Wacky Races' on it! (Was that a run-on sentence?) Is the Japanese electronics market so specialised as to have boxes of blank diskettes printed with pictures of American cartoon characters on it? Even obscure characters like Muttley? If this is true, I'm going to have to move to Japan!

3) Oh yeah, I love *Super Play*. Of course I still read American magazines to get more American-orientated news, but yours is the only magazine I really enjoy consistently.

Shawn Bowman, Lawton, Ok., USA

Right, let's see.

(1) The Sinclair ZX Spectrum was an 8-bit home computer with a keyboard made of tofu. Immensely popular round these parts during the '80s. Did all our overseas readers miss out on Clive Sinclair's electronic calculators, the ZX80, the ZX81 with wobbly RAM pack, and the C5 electric car? Em, don't worry if you did.

(2) You have the trained eyes of a hunting falcon, young Bowman. We checked Nic's original photo and a box of Hanna Barbera branded discs it is indeed.

(3) Er, that's not a question. Oh, I see. Thanks very much. So what do you think of *Game Players* and *NEXT Generation*, both of which have strong Future ties?

Muttley – star of cartoon and computer disk.

'STUPID DEATH DOLLOP'

I have never written to a magazine before, but now I feel that I must. The main reason is that I love RPGs, something that is quite common among *Super Play* readers!

Concerning *Secret of Mana*, I was more than disgusted at having to wait 11 months for an official UK release after that of the American release. Yes, Nintendo holds the rights on distributing Square games in the UK, so why don't they distribute them? Once a game has been translated from Japanese to English for the American market it shouldn't be too difficult to convert the cart into a PAL version for a UK release. Is that too easy for Nintendo? Must they be told by 'the public' a thousand times: we want RPGs?

For every month one of Square's RPGs is unofficial, potential UK sales are affected by the grey importers. Due to this reception, Nintendo will probably take longer picking games for the UK market. But this seems very unlikely as the excellent game *Final Fantasy III* has been available in America for over five months. Just what is the delay? When will it arrive in the UK – 10 months time? Never? If that's the case, what about *Front Mission* or the massive *Chrono Trigger*? Will we see them in the UK this year?! I doubt it very much, so why doesn't Nintendo just get off the rights for Square UK releases and let someone else take care of it – someone that can be bothered.

People in the UK hear about the games everyone is playing, but don't play them until they are old and almost forgotten. Will we ever be able to shout or scream loud enough for the stupid death dollop that is Nintendo UK to take notice and do what has to be done?!!

Terry Machin, Lincoln

In fairness, NUK did encounter genuine technical obstacles in producing a PAL version of *Mana* which added to the delay.

LEAVE THE STAGE KINDLY

After this month's offerings, all we can say is: come back Peter Brodie – all is forgiven.

What's brown on the outside and black, white, black, white, black, white on the inside?
A nun in a barrel rolling down a hill.
Timothy Gill, Swansea
0/10
One joke? Is that it?

Get 5/10 or above for your joke and you win yourself something spesh. Kindly Leave The Stage, Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

I NEVER KNEW THERE WAS SO MUCH IN IT

Robert's Nintendo joypad has been left tattered and broken after playing against Shampoo in *Ranma 1/2* and attempting numerous missions in *Pilotwings*. As you can probably guess, Robert was not successful.

Perhaps Nintendo ought to write warnings to make people aware of temper tantrums... Yours till the kitchen sinks,
Laura 'C-Ko' Watton, Halesowen (with help from Robert Gibbs)

That's nothing. You should have seen the state of our old office after Stuart Campbell played Robocop Vs. Terminator.

Unfortunately it doesn't really excuse them if you see it as just another indictment of their 50Hz hardware. Ho hum.

Nevertheless we find it rather amusing that our rival, Nintendo UK's officially licensed magazine, has recently been giving its highest scores to the sort of grey imports and untranslated Japanese games that we've always promoted. Right under Nintendo's nose, as it were. All due respect to the boy Harrod.

'TRIGGER AS WELL'

Why hasn't *Final Fantasy III* been snapped up by Nintendo UK yet? *Illusion of Gaia* was reviewed in your magazine the same issue as *FFIII* and got by far the lower mark. Yet it's just been released in the UK as *Illusion of Time*. Nintendo UK is supposed to have a first option on all Squaresoft games. They don't seem to be doing much with this agreement, do they? I remember reading in issue 26's editorial (and I quote): "It appears that there'll be soon be a trickle of RPGs being released over here, which will turn into a flood." Over the past six months only *Mana* and *Gaia* have made it over here. I'm eagerly awaiting *Secret of Mana 2* and *Chrono Trigger* as well as *FFIII* but will they ever make it to the UK in time for Christmas?
Matthew Sheppard, Bristol
One reason for *Illusion of Time*'s preference is that it's an action RPG, not a turn-based RPG like *FFIII*, and would thus be seen as more appealing to console owners. That's still the risible perception within the UK games industry, I'm afraid; that consoles are just for kids and those not intelligent enough to use a computer. The footling idiots.

It's also rumoured that Enix is hoping for the same agreement with Nintendo UK as Square supposedly has. But is it worth it? After all that we were led to believe, we're as puzzled and disappointed as you. Talking of bureaucratic procrastination...

'DESIGNER PERFUMES'

Has anyone else ever noticed that officialdom is always slow on the uptake and, when it finally does catch on, it manages to leave things seriously FUBAR? I am of course referring to the Monopolies And Mergers Commission's finding that videogames are overpriced. Any gamer capable of speech could have told them that one.

Now that overpricing is official, I can't help feeling that nothing is going to change and that, if it does, it will be because no politician is being paid backhanders by the video games industry. After all, these are the same people who decided that designer perfumes were not overpriced – even though they can be purchased on the continent for half the price.

Also, when they concluded that audio CDs were overpriced they threatened price controls. This has appeared to have no effect whatsoever as CDs still cost around £15. If anyone debates that costs will be lower all I can say is: Playstation *Ridge Racer* for a whopping £37, anyone?

I do notice, though, that you believe removing £10 from the £50 cost of a brand new cartridge will increase sales. I disagree and refer you to *Edge* 5 and Paul McGarvey's comment: "You have to go well below £30 before it becomes an impulse purchase".

Let's face it, there is no way you can make money on cartridges of 16 megabits nowadays at a mere £30. All price-cutting tactics will do is reduce profits and, as profits are cut, our choice will then be reduced as companies will not release quality products purely because they would not appeal to the market of the time, meaning that their release would not be financially viable. *Mana* or just plain *Mario*. Take your pick.
Nemo, Rosyth
No – a price cut of £10 across the board *will* improve sales, even if it won't place many cartridges within a Saturday shopper's 'impulse purchase' range. But you are most definitely right that the relatively small size of the UK console market, compared with that in Japan, has greatly limited the choice of games available to us. Prepare to be surprised: in the next couple of months we plan to expose the more bizarre genres of Super Famicom gaming that you'll only ever find in the East.

FUBAR was lost on us, incidentally, but we assume it's some kind of variation on the likes of SNAFU or FUGAZI. Ah well, we can at least rejoice in the strange evolution of our versatile post-Norman tongue.

THE SUPER PLAY INTERESTING-O-METER

Check what hot topics will turn us on with our trusty litmus of letters.

Amazing things not yet done with a SNES

Suspicious substances found on game boxes

HOT NOT

Monopolies, mergers and market economics

Handy household hints

'THE MARVELS OF DEMOCRATICALLY REGULATED CAPITALISM'

So the MMC finally came up with the earth-shattering revelation that no video game is worth sixty quid? Hoo bloody rah. So a bunch of overpaid suits sat on their big fat leathery chairs for over a year before announcing that we've been ripped off? Amazing. And then we find out that Nintendo has got months to blah-di-blah with the government before anything might actually happen? Well, well, well – the marvels of democratically regulated capitalism.

But before all those irate readers start whining about prices all over again in your fine upstanding column, might I pre-emptively take the wind out of their burgeoning sails with the word 'budget'? Yes, budget. I'm not the richest gamefreak in the world but I now have a library of some 15 carts, only two of which set me back more than 20 pounds. In fact, the whole lot cost me about half a Saturn. A positive barg, as some would put it.

I'd like to let your readers know that they can stop concerning themselves with cash-hungry companies and start playing more games. Places like the TCR Computer Exchange seem eager to clear their shelves of old SNES titles with low prices, and I'm more than happy to oblige.
Aaron Mendel, Middlesex.
When that label 'Kixx' makes its way into your best-selling game charts, you know that the market is changing. It might look a bit depressing to see old titles outselling new ones, but if it means more games for players who've previously only been

HIGHLIGHTS

It's not long since everyone was breaking wrists to pull off six-hitters in *SSFII* – and then they were meant as the character's best attack. Now you've gotta do them in almost EVERY offensive move?! It smacks of pretentiousness, so it does. REEKS of the stuff.
Phil Halliwell, Co. Durham
Not everyone enjoys playing the move-mongous *Killer Instinct coin-op*, true. But, as a devoted Roxette fan, Phil must surely be rather accustomed to holding the minority opinion. That's not too below the belt, is it?

I was quite surprised to see on page 19, issue 31, that in the Akira report you refer to the screenshots of Tetsuo as the character Akira?? Was this a deliberate ploy to lure the more observant into writing in or, God forbid, was this a MISTAKE??
James Deighton, Morden
Worryingly, we're not sure who did those captions. You can't get the staff, you know.

Some of us Super Play readers are actually old enough to go to the pub and everything!
Dave Findlay, somewhere out on the internet
Indeed, those reader survey forms tell us that at least a third of you are able to vote, drive, purchase intoxicating substances and wed without parental consent. How you find time to play video games is a mystery.

The Nautilus is available for hire at one grand an hour or twenty thousand a day. N.B. you must provide your own plutonium for the spanking new nuclear reactor.
Nemo, Rosyth
Just one question: does it have to be weapons-grade plutonium? Wil might still be interested.

able to get new carts as birthday or Christmas presents then we're all for it. We'll be pointing you in the direction of the best buys in future issues of *Super Play*.

When Mode Seven asked you for readers' tips, we somehow expected game tips. But Mr D Allport of Rotherham has also graced us with a letter worthy of CHAT! or WOMAN'S OWN on the hazards of game exchanges...

'COVERED IN SELLOTAPE, OR JAM, OR WORSE'

Whilst I agree that buying second-hand games is an inexpensive way to play games, I can't help but wonder what some people do with their cart boxes – and carts, for that matter. I don't know about you but, when I buy a new game, the box goes on a shelf in my living room and stays there in mint condition until I've either finished the game or got bored with it. But the amount of exchanges I've done where the box is crushed or ripped, or covered in sellotape, or jam, or worse, is ridiculous. Don't you think exchange shops and the like should give good condition games and boxes a better exchange rate, and penalise people who don't look after their gear? A tip for gamers with this same problem is to use methylated spirit on the plastic casing of the cart. It cleans them up well and doesn't harm the game sticker on the front.

Mr. D Allport, Rotherham

And I was foolish enough to think I'd seen off the Great Box Debate. Now I'm dreading this will open the floodgates for handy household hints on cartridge racks, edge connector maintenance, and keeping those long trailing leads tidy to prevent accidental and potentially lethal trip-uppance.

WRITE NOW!

Send us a letter and, if it isn't covered in sellotape or jam, there's a good chance you'll see your name here.

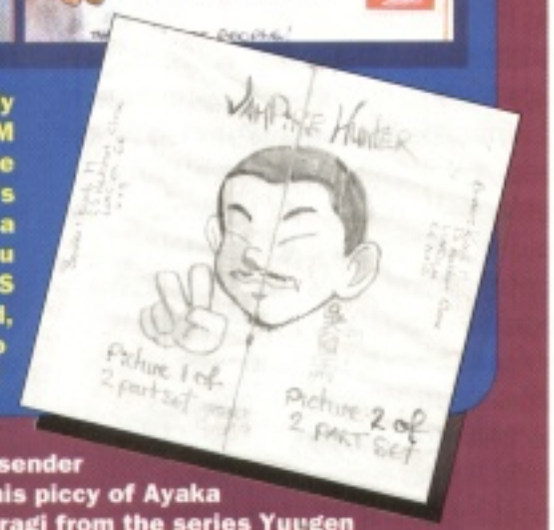
PLAYBACK, SUPER PLAY, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW.

ENVELOPE ART!

Get your art in print and collect a *Super Play* pen. If it's the winner, you could win our much acclaimed Mystery Prize of the Month.

WINNER!

This two part envelope art really caught our eye this month. M Kwok's superb rendition of the characters from Capcom's *Darkstalkers*, complete with a self-portrait on the back. You can bet that if a SNES conversion ever gets confirmed, Wil'll be chomping at the bit to do his own version!



We're not quite sure who the character in Ryan Cooper's picture is (hey, we don't know every series!) but you can't fail to recognise the Rabbite from *Secret Of Mana* in the corner.

The sender of this piccy of Ayaka Kisaragi from the series Yuugen Kaisha has obviously been reading the april issue of Anime UK. Unfortunately we've lost your name! So get in touch and we'll send you your prize.

The ever popular *Appleseed* comes courtesy of charlie Rowsell. With some nice work on Hitomi's power suit and even versions of Shirow's little SD characters.

Suprisingly we haven't had that many *Earthworm Jim* pictures (you all seem to prefer the Japanese style). But this painting by M. Hussein of London is the best so far.

This rather aggressive looking Chun-Li comes from Robert Scott from Lancashire.

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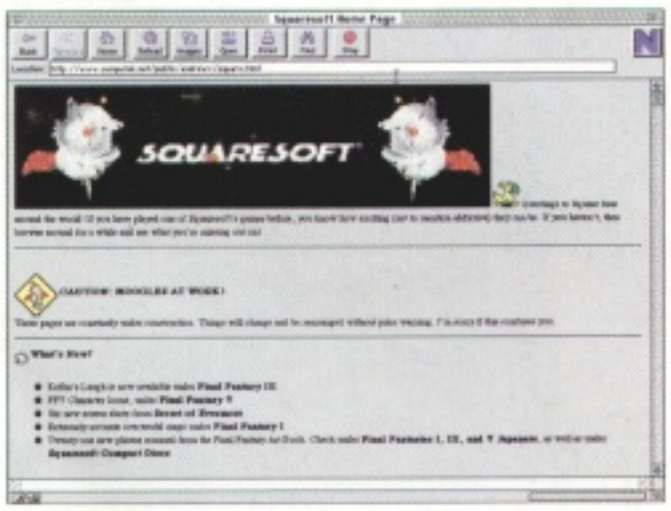
FINAL FANTASY FORUM

Plunder ruined castles, encounter mysteriously loaded cactus men and get swallowed by a sandworm as we reveal more secrets from the world of Square.

We're still being overwhelmed with your tips and questions, some reaching us from as far afield as Canada and Australia, but there's plenty more to discover and discuss, so keep them coming. Can Nintendo UK really afford to ignore this enthusiasm?

Lies, Damned Lies And Statistics

It's not the same in the States or Japan, of course. *Final Fantasy*'s popularity has made it a focal point of discussion in fanzines and internet FAQs, particularly in the US (this month we even managed to drag several different Chocobo themes from the World Wide Web...). But as you'd expect from something so talked about, there's a healthy mythology regarding the game's secrets and characters.



If you know where to surf, the Internet can provide a wealth of *Final Fantasy* related goodies.

How much of it has ever been close friends with Mister Truth remains to be seen.

For example, it's said that you'll get a special ending sequence (as if the normal one isn't special enough) if you perform all of the following:

- **Collect all of the Paladin items. There may be more than the known Shield and Ring.**
- **Find all of the Espers, including Raiden and Ragnarok.**
- **Find all of the hidden characters.**
- **Save Shadow and Cid.**
- **Finish the game, obviously.**

Those of you struggling by with adaptors and crashing end sequences may be cursing at the thought that you might miss out yet again, but remember this special ending has yet to be confirmed.

Even when you've found all the obvious hidden characters like Gogo, a couple of spaces exist on the party select window. Are they redundant, or simply waiting for characters as yet unrevealed by the manual?

In the absence of fact, rumour thrives. Hence the number of stories surrounding Shadow. One concerns the knowledge that only he and Relm are allowed to equip the mysterious Memento Ring (hidden in Strago's house – look upstairs on the left side of the table for a chest hidden in the wall). Could there be, perchance, some familial link? We hope *SPlay* readers will be able to help us out by finding all of Shadow's flashback dream sequences...

Indeed, the *FF* series holds such a cult status for many American SF & fantasy genre aficionados that, as we recently discovered, some fan groups have even developed their own paper-&-dice roleplaying game in the Dungeons and Dragons style, based entirely on Square's imaginary milieu. Taking note of all the status screen statistics, monster hit points and special attacks, they've worked backwards from the game's battle system to create their own percentile dice combat rules. Now that's what we call hardcore fandom.

And finally...

Thanks this month go to Peter Fenings of Ormskirk, Etienne Bolduc of Quebec, Neil Larner of Milton Keynes, Andrew Marubbi of Wrexham, Ben Wickenden of Surrey and Chandra Nair.

Tips, cheats, Q&As, artwork – we want it all. Tie your letter to a loyal black chocobo and point it in the direction of:

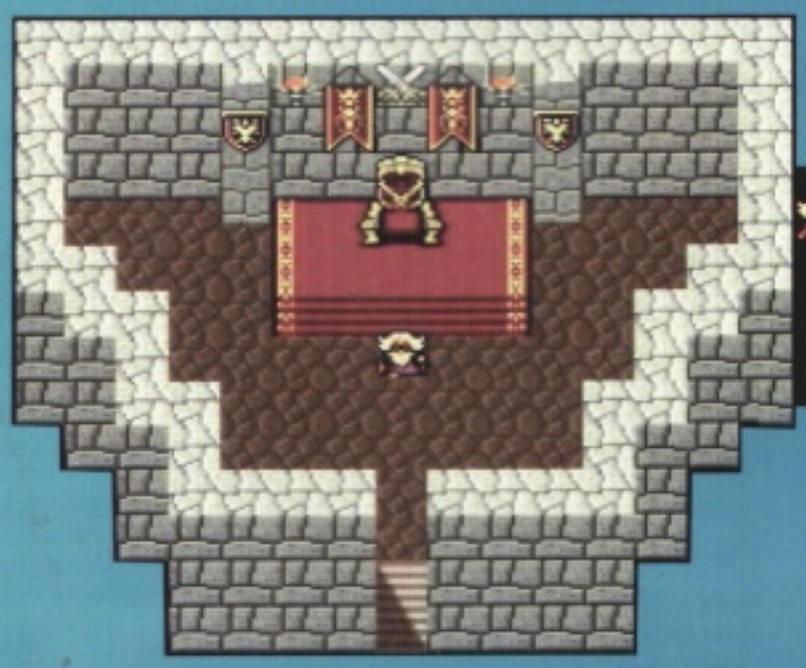
Final Fantasy Forum, *Super Play*, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

THE RUINED CASTLE OF EBLAN

Since the storyline of *FF2* doesn't take you directly to the Ruined Castle of Eblan, many people miss out on this trove of hidden treasures. There are tough beasties protecting some of them but, if you know what you're doing, it's worth trying to beat them with characters around level 22-25. So as soon as you've taken control of an airship, buy silver armour and weapons on the island of Silvera and look for the Tower of Bab-il's upperworld protruberance: Eblan is south, just east of the Dark Elf's lair.

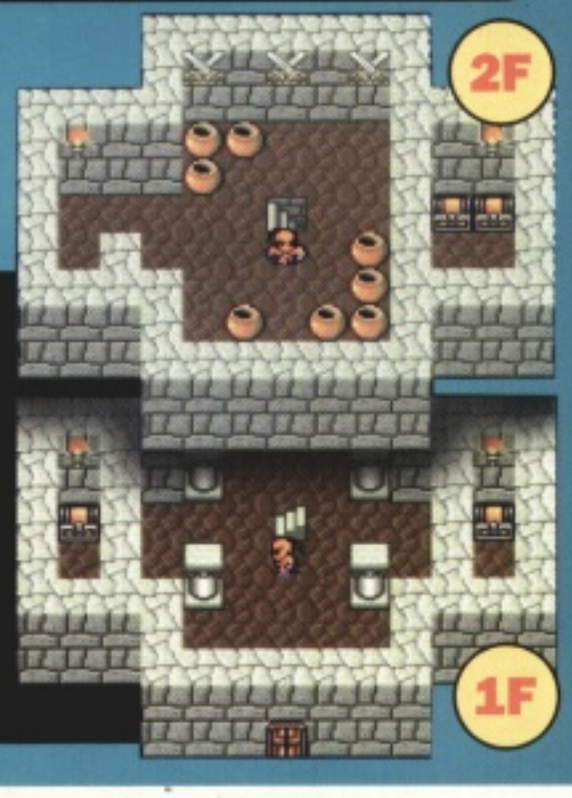
Certain chests in *Final Fantasy* will automatically place you in a monster encounter. Never run away from any such battle as you will lose the item contained in the chest forever.

Just below the tower of Bab-il lies a castle just waiting to be plundered.



Castle Hall Treasures: Cure2
2F Treasures: Cabin, Life1, Heal, 2 x Cure2

King's Room
Hidden passages to the left and right of the throne lead to stairwells down to 2F's cache of caskets.

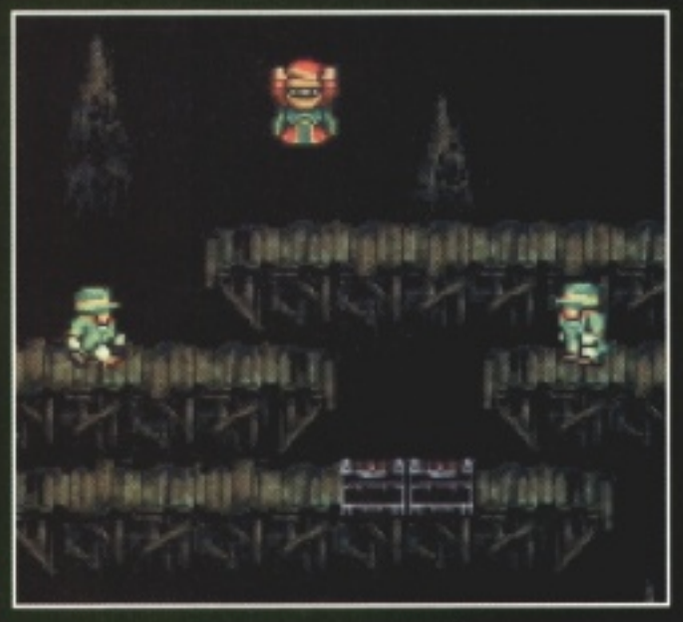


Left Tower
1F Treasures: Ether1, Slumber
When you walk through the door of this tower, immediately take two steps back towards the door and walk right. A secret passage leads round to a chest guarded by a Staleman and four Skulls. Kill all the Skulls first and your weapons will be more effective against the Staleman. You'll gain the Slumber sword for Cecil which, predictably, puts victims to sleep at random.
2F Treasures: Mute Arrows, 2 x Cure2, 2000GP
A warp on the left of the room takes you to 1F. Walk straight down from the stairwell to find a path around the pots to the chests on the right.

PROFILES

GOGO

Above: The ability to equip Gogo with any of your team's attributes makes him an incredibly powerful character.



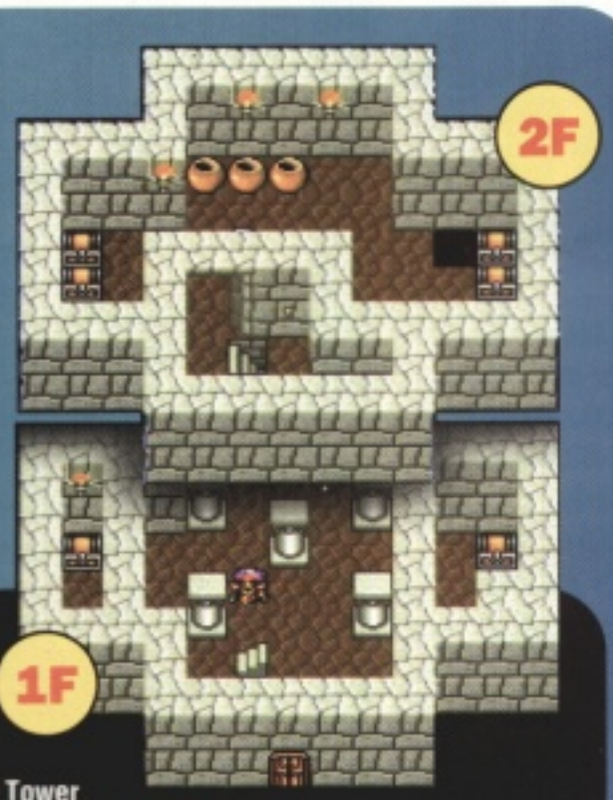
Right: Don't forget, you need to fall off a bridge at least once to secure yet more treasure in Gogo's underworld.

CACTUS MAN BLOWS FISH FOR MONEY

Feeling hard up in *FFIII*? Strapped for cash after buying that last shield? Then set the controls for the heart of the sun. The village of Maranda can be found in the lower left south-western corner of the map: to the south of it is a small stretch of hot sandy desert where all random monster encounters involve just two creatures, the enormous Hoover and the enigmatic Cactrot. Defeating them will give you 5 and 10 Magic Points respectively – quite splendid in itself – but both are worth a staggering 10,000 Gold Pieces. Use Float to avoid Quakes and you can make an easy quarter million in the space of 25 minutes.

Both Cactrot and the Hoover make for a very financially rewarding battle.

Basement
Treasures: Ether1, Ether1, Elixir
That Slumber sword will help you take on the three Mad Ogres.



Right Tower
1F Treasures: 600GP, 800GP
Stand above the top left-hand pillar and push left into the wall to find a hidden passage.
2F Treasures: Cure2, Life1, Ether1, Cabin, Drain
The line of pots points to a secret exit in the top-right corner: just push right into the wall and you'll walk out into the 'sky', thus reaching a chest guarded by two Black Cats and a Lamia. Keep the Drain Spear within for Kain. Fall through the hole to 1F, grab the cash and go south to warp to the basement.

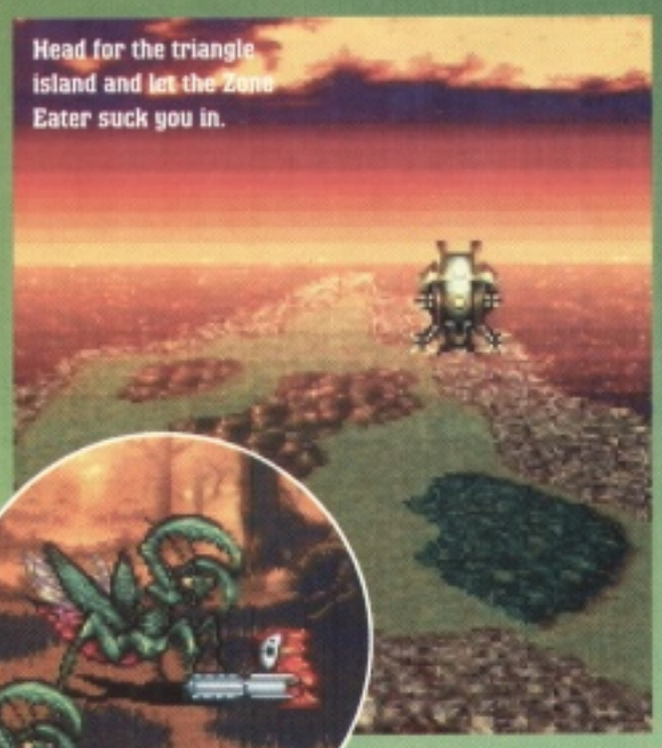
When you first meet this clownish rogue you'll think he looks familiar: Kefka in hiding? Shadow in disguise? In fact, is it man, or woman, or, or... or "a bloke in a dress" as one down-to-earth *SPlay* reader put it.

Gogo is perhaps the most well-known of the hidden characters, although you tend to find him by accident. Head for the Triangle Island in the top right, north-eastern corner of the map.

The indigenous monster, the Zone Eater, will attack you as you wander around the island. Let it engulf your entire party and you'll find yourself 'excreted' in a cavernous subterranean lair. Jump across the rickety bridges whilst avoiding the guards (though dive off at least once to find some extra treasures: there's a Fake Moustache relic to be found too) and dodge the crushing ceiling to reach Gogo's hiding place.

Gogo's special ability is Mimic: he'll imitate the last attack performed by another party member. Even an awesome magic such as Ultima or a multiple attack with Genji Glove and Offering can be reproduced by this ability, without Gogo requiring MPs or relics.

What most players don't know, however, is that Mimic is not Gogo's only skill. Call up his Status screen and you'll see a glove cursor hovering in his skill box. Move it down to the space below 'Mimic', press A and a new menu will appear, offering Gogo the choice of almost every other skill in the game! There's room for three more skills to be added, and these can be altered at any time. Effectively it makes him one of the most powerful characters, as he can perform Blitz attacks, wield Tools, Mimic and Dance in the space of one battle. Nor does he ever have to learn magic – simply add it to his list of skills. But note that he'll only be as good at any skill as the character in your current game from whom he copies it.



Head for the triangle island and let the Zone Eater suck you in.

Left: Gogo takes on Edgar's Chainsaw tool with devastating results.

BACK ISSUES

ISSUE 1 – 3 *SOLD OUT*

ISSUE 4
Human Grand Prix reviewed; and a player's guide to *Another World*.

ISSUE 5
Game Genie vs Action Replay; plus *Assault Suits Valken* and *Kikikaikai*.

ISSUE 6
Starfox previewed; *Super SWIV* reviewed; *SFII* guide.

ISSUE 7
Starfox reviewed; fantasy game special; and lots more!

ISSUE 8
Pop'n Twinbee and *James Pond* reviewed; a player's guide to *Starfox*.

ISSUE 9
Loads on *SFII Turbo*; *Super Bomberman* challenge; an *Addams Family* guide.

ISSUE 10
Fixing your SNES; *Final Fight* and *Striker* reviewed; and a *Mystical Ninja* guide.

ISSUE 11
Super Mario Collection, *SFII Turbo* and *Mortal Kombat* reviewed.

ISSUE 12
A fantasy game special; an interview with Nintendo Hotline; and much more!

ISSUE 13
A football special, *Jurassic Park*, and *Top Gear* reviewed.

ISSUE 14
Pricing policies; the horror of anime; *Sky Blazer*, *Clay Fighter* and *Plok!*

ISSUE 15
Aladdin reviewed; and a *Jurassic Park* Super Player's Guide. Hurrah!

ISSUE 16
R-Type III and *NBA Showdown* reviewed; and those Rik Mayall ads.

ISSUE 17
Mega Man X and *NBA Jam* reviewed; *Equinox* and *Shadowrun* guides. Cor!

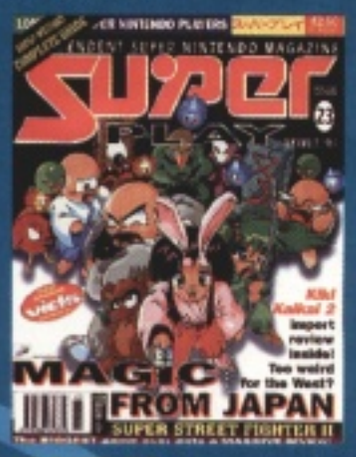
ISSUE 18
CES news; *Lufia*, *Super Puyo Puyo* and *Soccer Kid* reviewed; and a *Turtles* player's guide.

ISSUE 19
Fatal Fury 2 reviewed; a *Mystical Ninja 2* guide; we visit Nintendo of Japan; plus a free manga book.

ISSUE 20
Super Metroid reviewed; a football special; a *Mega Man X* guide; and how to get hold of cheap carts.

ISSUE 21
Vortex previewed; *Super Bomberman 2* and *Dragon* reviewed; and a *Clay Fighter* guide.

ISSUE 22
Wild Trax reviewed; How to draw anime; exclusive *Syndicate* feature; *NBA Jam* guide and more!



ISSUE 23
Super Street Fighter II reviewed; exclusive Squaresoft interview; *Super Metroid* player's guide.

ISSUE 24
Mortal Kombat reviewed; *Breath Of Fire* reviewed; *Super Street Fighter II* player's guide.

ISSUE 25
Sparkster and *Secret Of Mana* reviewed; *Mortal Kombat II* player's guide; plus loads more.

ISSUE 26
Final Fantasy III, *Illusion Of Gaia* and *Syndicate* reviewed; *MKII* player's guide; and much more!

ISSUE 27
Donkey Kong Country, *Ultimate Parodius* and *Demon's Blazon* reviewed; *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* tipped.

ISSUE 28
Samurai Spirits, *Cannon Fodder* and *Clayfighter 2*; plus *DKC* player's guide.

ISSUE 29
X-Men Special; *Pinball Fantasies*, *Ardy Lightfoot*; and part 2 of the *DKC* guide.

ISSUE 30
Huge *Mega Man* feature, *Killer Instinct* guide; plus loads of reviews...

ISSUE 31
Free postcards; reviews of *Super Turrican 2* and *Front Mission*.

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ISSUE 33
In-depth *Chrono Trigger* feature, a look at the DIY shoot-'em-up kit *Dezaemon*, and an interview with Miyamoto.

Ultimate

Future Games

Blighty joins the Next Generation!

Hold your breath, 'cos you won't believe what's in store for the Next Generation in Britain. We round up all the UK development teams and find out what they're planning for the super consoles, we give you all the latest technical info on the European machines, and answer those compatibility questions. All this is exclusive to Ultimate Future Games – so if you're looking to buy a Next Gen console, you can't afford to miss our July issue.

And also...

Reviews of Virtual Hydlide (Saturn) and Gunner's Heaven (PSX)

•

Sex on screen – just one frustrating scam?

•

Enter the Ultimate Videogames Quiz and win £250!

July issue out on
Thursday 1 June

Don't leave the 16-bits without it!

IRRESPONSIBLE pictures

From high above, in the inverted translucent cone that serves as a hyper-reality link between our world and the dimension of the demon puppy schoolgirl warriors, Super Play surveys this month's new anime videos.

8 MAN AFTER

East 2 West

55 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £12.99

18

Imagine *RoboCop* crossed with that classic 70s filmic experience, *Rollerball*. Add some fairly nonsensical background plot, make sure there's plenty of violence, add an Ultraman suit and what you've got is *8 Man After*.

The *8 Man* character actually predates *RoboCop* (and doesn't claim to be a *Rollerball* homage), so it's not exactly a copy of those films, but nevertheless, there's something spooky about the way 8 Man, a knackered human rebuilt into the form of a super-powerful law-enforcement cyborg, is warned about the fact that he may, just may, suffer from some retained memories which haven't been wiped properly from the time when he was a human cop, doing his duty when it all went wrong.

8 Man is a pretty invincible type of guy. He doesn't use much in the way of sophisticated weaponry, but prefers to use his incredible running speed, and the ability to dodge rockets, bullets, lasers and broken bottles to get close to his foes. And when he reaches them, he chops them a bit with his harder-than-steel hands.

Unluckily for him there's a gang operating in his neighbourhood who are themselves made out of bits of metal. When they're on their own they're no match for 8, but when they club together, well, maybe they can have him. Actually, they can't; you know what cyber-anime is like.

For nearly an hour, there isn't quite as much violence as there should be, or would expect from an 18 certificate. A few great action-packed seconds at the beginning, a bit of a lull during which the beginnings of a plot are hatched, and some punchulatory fun later, is about it.

The style is neat, with some decent visual effects and jokes, but there isn't quite the gasp factor you'd hope for.

Still, pretty solid stuff, and the length of this first episode gives the title added appeal..

James Leach

3 out of 5

ANGEL COP Vol 1

Manga Video

30 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £5.99

18

This is the first part of a series starring the nails Special Security Force. These elite police types are fighting the rise of terrorism in Japan, which, owing to its massive economic importance, is being seen as a haven for terrorists, assassins, madmen, dictators and National Lottery winners.

Bombs explode on every street corner. A trip to the newsagent means the risk of being raked by heavy-calibre machine-gun fire from at least a dozen passing stolen vans. Something, clearly, must be done.

Angel Cop is a motorcycling Special Security Agent with a pretty smile and a loaded .45. Or is it a .357? It makes Manga splatty holes in bad guys who collapse, eyes staring in shock and surprise, the word 'Huh!?' still echoing in their mouths.

The story sets up the ten-man special team, who, we learn, have the much coveted licence to kill. According to all anime videos, cops in Japan open fire on whoever they choose whenever they like, so perhaps it helps ease their consciences, knowing they can blow some punks away and not get a mild dressing down when they return to the precinct.

Anyway, the team go into action against some disreputable terrorists, and it soon becomes apparent that they're not your run-of-the-mill rozzers. Despite a deplorable absence of metallic body parts, these guys are pretty good. The motorbikes, whilst looking and sounding great, prove to be an ill-chosen mode of transport, owing to their vulnerability, but Angel Cop, of course, manages superbly. Until she gets an inkling that all is not what it seems. Terrorism is one thing, but perhaps she's up against something far more sinister. Something that you'll have to buy loads more videos to find the truth out about.

Angel Cop is fine as far as it goes. It's formulaic, has bad language, American accents and a fair bit of violence. But at only 30 minutes, this episode ends just when it gets going. Oi, Manga! You couldn't bung two on each cassette, could you?

James Leach

3 out of 5

PATLABOR - THE MOVIE 1999 TOKYO WAR

Manga Video

90 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £13.99

PG

Tokyo's in trouble, but hey, what's new. With a city full of eight thousand robots (known as Labors) you should expect a few problems. But with more and more rogue Labors running amok things begin to go from bad to worse. When Noah Izumi and Azuma Shinohara from the police unit Special Vehicle Division 2 are sent to investigate the disturbances, the trail begins to lead from the newly installed Labor HOS (Hyper Operating System) to the massive Babylon Project Ark – a maintenance platform for the city's Labors in Tokyo Bay. And just what is the link with the mysterious suicide of HOS designer Eiji Hoba who's personal records have been destroyed.

A story that could have easily degenerated into a robot fist fest, but *Mobile Police Patlabor* is far more than that. Along with *Wings Of Honneamise* earlier this year, *Patlabor* has a superb story to carry it. Kazurimori Ito's screenplay unravels the threads of the runaway Labors' mystery slowly and intelligently, and I defy anyone (who hasn't read the stupidly revealing press release) to guess at its conclusion.

The whole feel of the movie is far darker than its TV counterpart and the character designs are also far more restrained, not that we've seen the original to compare it with. But the fact that it does come from an already existing series means that there isn't much in the way of character development. After all, why bother when all that work has been done elsewhere. Good for the Japanese, but not so for us. However this doesn't spoil the fact that this is a quality film, with superb animation, and a story filled with tension and action. Even the English dubbing doesn't ruin it, and for those of you diehards who are offended by such things, Manga have also released a subtitled version. Currently going the rounds with the Manga Festival, you could do worse than to catch *Mobile Police Patlabor* as it was meant to be seen on the big screen but that shouldn't stop you buying the video. This ranks up there with *Akira* and *Wings Of Honneamise*.

Wil Overton

5 out of 5

IP NEWSLINE

OH MY GODDESS! #2
Midsummer Nights Dream
Anime Projects

U

30 minutes (subtitled) RRP: £12.99

You'd be forgiven for thinking that Keiichi needs a good kick up the backside for being so incredibly wet. It's been five months now since Belldandy arrived in the poor lovelorn youth's life and the lad now wants to hold her hand – the scally!

Belldandy's goddess sister is a bit of a one and decides that a love potion will enable the boy to confess all and lead to greater things. Needless to say, her endless meddling leads to Keiichi's near drowning and confessing love to the wrong girl. Tsk. Still, it all turns out okay in the end, so they can live to make another episode.

It's all dreamily animated – sickeningly soft-focus with nauseatingly cute music. Gentle, inoffensive comedy for the bleary-eyed brigade. Give it a go, but keep a bucket handy.

Alison Harper

3 out of 5

Convention Time

If you've ever thought, as you sit all alone in a darkened room with nothing but a TV, video and the complete set of *Urotskidoji* for company, that maybe you're not alone, and that, if only you could find them, there might be some likeminded individuals out there that you could share your passion for Japanese animation with, then prepare to throw free those shackles of loneliness and join the throbbing throng of UK anime fandom at one (or both) of the forthcoming conventions scheduled this year.

First up is MINAMI CON which takes place at the Hilton National Hotel in Portsmouth on Sunday July 23rd. Boasting two video projection rooms, anime quizzes, a dealers room, a bring and buy, and maybe even a masquerade (go on, you know you want to dress up), Minami's guest of honour is none other than *Anime UK*'s very own Helen McCarthy (so it should be good), whilst on the art side of things, artist extraordinaire Steve Kyte will be proving that you don't have to be Japanese to produce brilliant anime style artwork.

Prices for the convention start at £15 per person if you book before the day, and £20 on the day (although because of number restrictions they cannot guarantee you'll actually be able to get in on the day – so book early).

Should all of this malarkey appeal to you (and if not – why?), then you should address your enquires to the following address, and tell them *Super Play* sent you:

Minami Con
C/O Mark Cleaver • 15 New Road • Fair Oak • Eastleigh • Hampshire SO50 8EN

...and should you be connected to the information superhighway then try e-mailing them on:
mark@ayukawa.demon.co.uk (internet) – or:
100407,3632 (compuserve)

A bit further on in the year, Birmingham is host to the fourth ConTanimeTed convention. ReConTanime runs from 3rd to 5th November at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham. You must be over 12 to attend but under 18s must be accompanied. This time round there are three video rooms as well as the usual assortment of dealers, art and games rooms as well as panels, quizzes and, yes, a masquerade. The organizers promise loads of stuff you won't have seen before fresh from Japan, and if previous years are anything to go by, they won't disappoint. For more information get in touch with:

L. Sharman • 13 Prescott Close • Banbury • Oxon OX16 0RD
e-mail: **davidrow@ryoohki.demon.co.uk**
or: **denzil@chisai.demon.co.uk**

Goddess Winners

Back in issue 31 we gave you the opportunity to win a complete set of Anime Projects' *Oh My Goddess!* videos. The answer to the question 'What subtle change of title did the series go though for its release in the West?' was of course that in Japan it was known as *Ah! My Goddess*. We forgave those who missed out the repositioning of the exclamation mark (we're not that sad) and tapes should start winging their way shortly to: Simon Ng of London and Kim Bissix of Bristol. Well done and get those tissues in.

Top 5's Wanted

Following last month's Fanhunter Top 5 wanted UK anime releases we thought that we'd try and make it a regular here at IP. There'll be an anime related prize each month for a top 5 selected from all those we receive, so there's your incentive. Send your top 5s, no matter how obscure, for next month to:
Anime Top 5 (August)
Super Play • 30 Monmouth Street • Bath • Avon BA1 2BW to arrive no later than 20th June.

WIN KISHIN HEIDAN GOODIES

Following last month's more than favourable review of Pioneer LDCE's retro-mecha series *Kishin Heidan*, we've got some great Active Defence Force goodies to give away. Unfortunately they're not your very own Kishin Corps 60ft mecha (go on admit it, your mum wouldn't let you keep one in your room anyway) but it's the next best thing. Copies of the first nail-biting episode and an exclusive *Kishin Heidan* baseball cap are up for grabs and will be winging their way to the first five lucky souls out of the hat who have answered the following, highly contrived to fit in generally with *Kishin Heidan*, retro type question correctly:

Who invented the steam engine?

Think long, think hard and then perform the ritual competition-entering task of inscribing the answer on the back of a postcard along with your name and address and send it to:

Big Retro Robots Are Good Competition
Super Play
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
Avon BA12BW

The first five correct entries out of paper maché Gundam head will win the aforementioned videos and caps, much to the envy of the rest of UK anime fandom.

VIDEO DIARY

JUNE 1995

Another full line-up of anime releases to tempt your pocket. The *Super Play* recommendation of the month has to be the *Mobile Police Patlabor* movie which not only has a full complement of great characters and amazing animation but also a superb story. We guarantee that it will have you guessing right to the end.

MANGA VIDEO

MEGAZONE 23 PART III
PATLABOR – THE MOVIE 1999 TOKYO WAR
ANGEL COP – Part 2
NEW DOMINION TANK POLICE – Act 7
WINGS OF HONNEAMISE – (subtitled)
LEGEND OF THE FOUR KINGS – 9 & 10

WESTERN CONNECTION

May releases
LADIUS (subtitled)
SPACE FIREBIRD – (subtitled)
USHIO AND TORA – #5 (subtitled)
SLOW STEP – #3 (subtitled)

EAST 2 WEST

8th MAN AFTER – Vol 2
THE ADVENTURES OF KEKKO KAMEN – Vol 2

ANIME PROJECTS

OH MY GODDESS! – Part 4
Evergreen Holy Night (subtitled)
BUBBLEGUM CRISIS – #4 Revenge Road

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THE FEVER PITCH CHALLENGE

Take part in US Gold's Fever Pitch Challenge in HMV stores across the land and you could win some brilliant prizes...

If you were wise enough to have read last month's *Super Play* from cover to cover you'll have learned all about US Gold's *Fever Pitch*. A subtle blend of footy and violence, much as you'll see at stadiums across the country these days, it promises to be one of this summer's smash games.

To celebrate its release US Gold are running game challenges in HMV stores across the country. All you need to do is play. What you need to do is get yourself one of the 32 player places going at one of the venues, on the dates listed below, and have a go. If you fancy your chances, you can register for a place a week prior to the day of the challenge.

There are all sorts of goody bags to be won. And the overall winner will receive a Sony Playstation and every US Gold game for it for life! The winners of each HMV store heat will travel to London (all expenses paid) for the semis and finals to be held at Level One on Saturday, July 1st.

THE HMV VENUES

Between midday and 3pm on the following days...

Saturday, June 3rd

Glasgow (Argyle St), **Liverpool** (Church St), **Birmingham** (High St), **Thurrock** (West Thurrock Way, Lakeside Shopping Centre), **Southampton** (Above Bar St), **London** (363 Oxford St), **Brighton** (Western Rd)

Saturday, June 10th

Newcastle (Northumberland St), **Manchester** (Market St), **Leeds** (Victoria Walk, Schofield Centre), **London** (Brent Cross Shopping Centre), **Reading** (Friar St), **Trocadero** (Picadilly), **Croydon** (North End)

The Super Play Challenge

Just in case you can't make it along to any of the venues – like you can't afford the bus fare or something – US Gold have sent us 30 T-shirts emblazoned with suitably in-yer-face slogans "Have you got the balls to play?" and "Parlez-vous kung fu?" to give away. For those of you of a sensitive nature there are also some with a discreet US Gold logo. If you'd like to get your body inside one of these, all you have to do is send us a postcard indicating which of the T-shirts you'd prefer and answer this simple teaser... Name four footy players who haven't got in trouble with the law this year. Send your answers in to:

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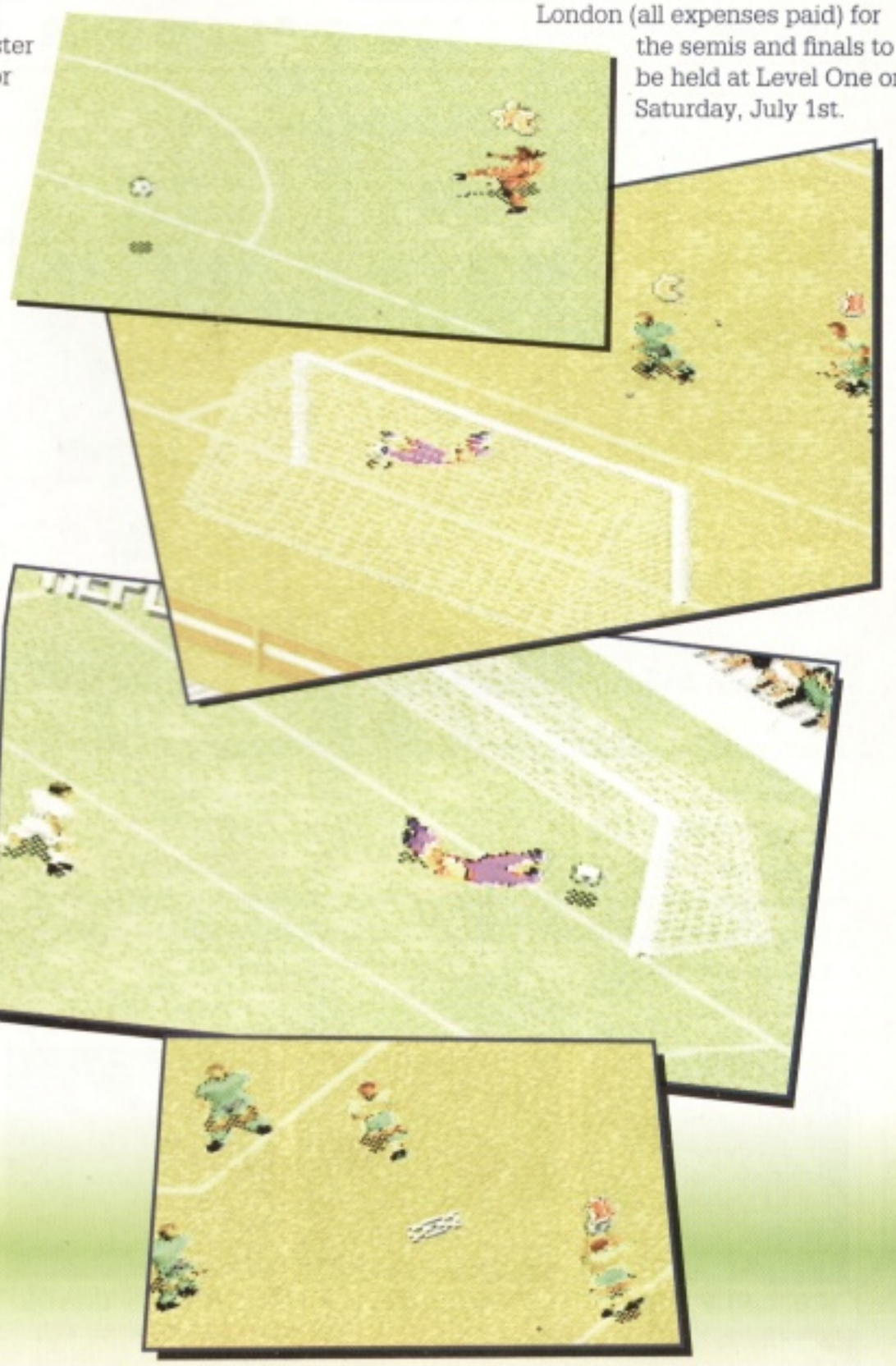

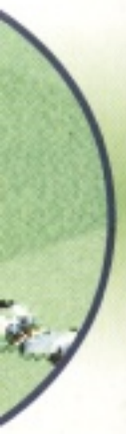

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NEXT MONTH IN SUPER PLAY

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Super PLAY

KILLER INSTINCT

Rare's coin-op hit pummels its way onto the Super Nintendo this August. *Super Play* looks at *Killer Instinct* and examines how they worked around the limitations of 16-bit hardware. Can it really recreate the arcade experience?

Eyedol – mean and nasty monster beast.

FROM DKC TO DKQ

As Diddy Kongs picks up where Donkey Kong ended, we ask if the young ape can do as well as his mentor the second time around.

EARTHWORM JIM 2

Shiny Entertainment's boneless hero fights on to protect his claim on the suit that endows him with superhuman abilities. *Super Play* finds out what to expect from the new cast of characters.

AKIRA TORIYAMA

Dragon Ball Z, Chrono Trigger, Go Go Ackman, Dragon Quest: our man in Japan reports on an exhibition devoted to the artist who has made spikey hair a statement of power.

Prepare for ocean-sizzling fireballs and mountain hurling sessions in Live From Hell City. Only in Super Play!

Find out more about the man who created them in the next issue of *Super Play*.

PLUS

A comprehensive guide to every big game worth looking out for in the coming year.

SUPER PLAY – DON'T MISS NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE!

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THE SUPER QUIZ ANSWERS

The answers to this month's quiz...

EASY

1) Ultra
2) Dixie
3) Game Boy

MEDIUM

1) Besides being lilac, they have a concave depression
2) Biplane, Parachute, Rocket Belt, Hang-glider, Helicopter
3) Hyrule

HARD

1) Besides being lilac, they have a concave depression
2) Biplane, Parachute, Rocket Belt, Hang-glider, Helicopter
3) Hyrule

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